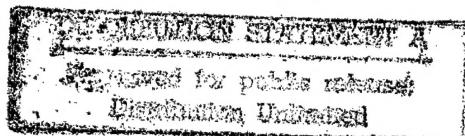


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USSR Report

MILITARY AFFAIRS

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29 November 1985

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MILITARY AFFAIRS**

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MILITARY-POLITICAL ISSUES

USSR: ARMY, NAVY REPORTING-ELECTION MEETINGS HELD

PM101445 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Oct 85 Second Edition p 2

[Unattributed report: "At the Soviet Army and Navy Main Political Directorate": "Unremitting Attention to Party Organs' Reports and Elections"]

[Text] The results of the first party report and election meetings have been summed up at the Soviet Army and Navy Main Political Directorate. Reports were heard on this question from Major General F. Voinov, chief of the political section of the Marshal of the Soviet Union R.YA. Malinovskiy Military Academy of Armored Troops, and Captain 1st Rank A. Dekhterev, chief of the political section of the A.S. Popov Higher Naval Radioelectronics School, as well as reports from other comrades.

The conference was addressed by Admiral A. Sorokin, first deputy chief of the Soviet Army and Navy Main Political Directorate.

As was noted in the reports and speeches, the report and election campaign in Army and Navy party organizations has become a significant sociopolitical event in their life. Party report and election meetings took place with a high level of activeness and a businesslike approach among Communists. Their attention is focused on questions of the activity of party organizations and party organs to implement the decisions of the 26th Party Congress and the April (1985) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. They unanimously approve the energetic foreign policy activity of the party and government and the program for accelerating the country's socioeconomic development and wholeheartedly support the course of increasing exactingness, imposing order everywhere, and taking measures to strengthen the country's defense capability.

The report and election meetings which have been held have shown that the Communists' discussions are centered on questions connected with increasing the vigilance and combat readiness of subunits, units, and ships in the conditions of the sharply exacerbated international military-political situation. The majority of organizations are discussing in suitably concrete terms the ways of strengthening party influence on improving the field, air, and sea training of personnel and improving the organization of socialist competition and educational work with servicemen. In the main, the meetings took place in an atmosphere of broad intraparty democracy, mutual exactingness and demandingness among Communists, and principled criticism and self-criticism. As a rule the

resolutions adopted at meetings mention by name those Communists against whom the party organization has serious complaints. The Communists now approach the evaluation of the activity of elected party organs with a higher degree of exactingness.

At the same time it was noted at the conference that certain party organizations still have not fully grasped that the present report and election campaign is taking place in a period of restructuring of the forms and methods of party leadership of various spheres of society's life and party political work in accordance with the directives of the CPSU Central Committee April Plenum. Current demands for a real turn toward problems of the intensification of labor, the enhancement of Communists' activeness and responsibility, a principled and businesslike approach on the part of party organizations, the activation of the human factor, the unconditional ensuring of unity of word and deed in the activity of Communists, and the honest and pure nature of the party person are becoming the determining factors in the content of reports and speeches. At certain meetings there is an evident lack of active involvement in life and in-depth study of the tasks now being resolved by the Army and Navy.

The need to make combat training conditions as close as possible to the conditions of modern warfare and improve the effectiveness of the mastery of modern hardware and the intensification of the training process makes it necessary for the reports, the discussion at meetings, and the resolutions adopted to be directed more keenly against instances of poor organization in the educational process and people becoming detached from studies, against the squandering of training time, and against omissions and laxity in combat training. It is necessary to step up the attention of report and election meetings toward commander training, the improvement of officers' grading, and their methodological skill. The reports and elections in party organizations coincide with the tests on the results of combat and political training. It is necessary objectively and comprehensively to assess the real state of affairs, reveal unutilized reserves, name specifically those who are making progress and those who are marking time in their combat training, and more actively mobilize communists to pass the tests on results with good and excellent grades.

The key question at report and election meetings is military discipline, its all-around analysis, and the exposure of weak points and positive experience in strengthening discipline. The party meetings which have been held confirm that in every party organization there are reserves for resolving the vital tasks of strengthening discipline. But some of the reports and speeches do not contain an instructive analysis of the factors and conditions which give rise to negative phenomena. They do not always name those communists who fail to ensure organization and order in the sector in their charge and do not uncover ways and means of resolving this task. The report and election meetings are called upon to direct Communists toward making every unit and ship a model of organization and strict observance of the order and rules laid down by Soviet laws and regulations. Communists must show an example in the struggle for firm discipline. Questions of discipline and of Communists' responsibility for maintaining it at a high standard must be posed pointedly and principally.

The conference noted that the vanguard role of Communists and their personal exemplary behavior in training, service, and everyday life are not being analyzed really exactingly everywhere. Here it is impossible to restrict oneself to general words; objects of close attention must be both Communists' competition pledges and how they are being fulfilled, and their attitude to Marxist-Leninist study and political self-education and to how they maintain their party authority among the masses and how close they are to people, and so forth.

It is important to analyze more substantively in the course of reports and elections the operation of the process of improving the ideological and political education of Communists and all personnel in the spirit of contemporary party demands. Meetings must examine directly questions of the ideological tempering of Communists and their participation in political work, and how each of them fulfills the role of party political fighter. Real ways of stepping up links between political education work and life and the tasks of maintaining high combat readiness, improving the quality of the training process, and strengthening discipline must be assimilated. The concern of political organs, party committees and bureaus and the aktiv is to seek to ensure that reports and speeches are geared to the most topical and urgent problems of ideological work and are pithy, packed with information, and politically to the point.

Closer attention must be paid to questions such as the effectiveness of party organizational work, the maturity of internal party relations, the stepping up of monitoring and verification of execution, the development of criticism and self-criticism, the discipline of the fulfillment of party decisions, and the progress in implementing the well-known CPSU Central Committee resolution on improving party leadership of the Komsomol. This latter is especially important as the report and election campaign unfolds in Komsomol organizations in the army and navy.

At some party report and election meetings, an analysis of party work, forms, methods, and ways of party influence on all aspects of life of the subunit, unit, or ship is being replaced by talk about problems and omissions couched in the spirit of official conferences. Poor leadership on the part of the superior elective party organ, the political section, has its effect here. Both this defect and the overregimentation of meetings are impermissible. Maximum concern must be shown--and the CPSU Central Committee April Plenum drew special attention to this--to ensure that meetings of primary organizations are held in a businesslike fashion, without false idealization and empty words, and in an atmosphere of criticism and self-criticism and bolshevist frankness, so that there can be discussion of the most acute questions of collectives' lives and of ways to eliminate everything that hampers work.

A current task of political organs and party committees and bureaus now is to analyze comprehensively the first results of the report and election campaign, eliminate the shortcomings noted, and lend a constructive and critical thrust and a true party tone to the upcoming meetings. For this purpose it is necessary to raise the role and responsibility of party organizational work sections and branches, senior instructors for party organizational work, and representatives of higher bodies sent to participate in the work of report and election

meetings. The preparation of regiment and ship party meetings and party conferences requires special attention. The formation of elective party organs must be approached more carefully. It is important to elect to party committees and bureaus communists capable of persuading people and able to put party policy into practice, and not elect people according to the principle of their lesser preoccupation with official duties, which is sometimes observed. Efficient instruction and training of the newly elected party aktiv must be ensured.

It is also necessary to ensure everywhere that proposals and rebukes expressed at meetings are examined attentively, that the appropriate measures are adopted on them, and that Communists are promptly informed of this. No practical ideas must be wasted. The whole report and election campaign in army and navy party organizations must be given wider publicity.

Reports and elections have entered a new phase--meetings have begun in primary party organizations. The task is to make the maximum use of them in order to boost the activeness and responsibility of army and navy Communists, increase the militancy of party organizations, consolidate their links with the mass of servicemen, improve the combat readiness of troops and naval forces, strengthen discipline and organization, and greet the 27th CPSU Congress in worthy fashion.

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CSO: 1801/39

MILITARY-POLITICAL ISSUES

EDITORIAL ON NEED FOR PRINCIPLED OFFICERS

PM141519 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 10 Oct 85 Second Edition p 1

[Editorial: "The Principled Nature of a Leader"]

[Text] The patrol ship "n" was long considered to be constantly below standard. But then Captain 3d Class A. Pogulyayev, an exacting and principled officer, was appointed commander of it. From the outset of his period in office the new commander took the helm: There was to be nothing negative within the crew, existing shortcomings had to be courageously exposed and given the strictest assessment. This line did not immediately find support or understanding with everyone. Some people, accustomed to connivance and the absence of strict demands, found it hard to adapt. However, the commander was firm and uncompromising in his demands, made skillful use of the party organization in his work, and ultimately achieved tangible changes. The crew's responsibility for the qualitative solution of combat training tests increased appreciably and discipline on board improved. This year the patrol ship was among the best in the formation.

Adherence to principle and exactingness toward yourself and others--these are the most important features of the Leninist work style, which must be inherent in all commanders, chiefs, and all military leaders. A man's maturity, responsibility, and his ability to think and act as the state requires and in the spirit of the times, rightly enables you to judge how principled he is in implementing party policy and the requirements of the military oath and regulations.

Responsibility, exactingness, initiative, principledness, resoluteness and consistency in eliminating existing shortcomings, and the fundamental improvement of work in all areas--these demands made by the CPSU Central Committee April (1985) Plenum also apply fully to military cadres.

The principledness of a commander, political worker, and staff officer should be shown primarily in concrete deeds. Now, at the final stage of the training year, it is reflected in the determined struggle to fulfill the plans and programs of combat and political training and socialist pledges adopted in honor of the 27th CPSU Congress, exacting assessment of achievements, purposeful establishment of firm regulation order, and vigorous measures to strengthen military discipline.

In the Army and Navy there are quite a few officers, generals, and admirals who set an example of genuine party-mindedness, responsibility, and principledness with regard to their official duty. However, you still encounter people whose words are at variance with their deeds, who are characteristically uncritical toward what has been achieved, tend to exaggerate successes, and are unwilling to notice negative phenomena. Certain military collectives have for years tolerated the same omissions in training and service, instances of oversimplification and slackness in combat training, and various breaches of the regulations and other guiding documents. In some places it has become the custom to constantly blame shortcomings not on personal failings but on various objective factors. Of course, there are difficulties in any work. However, a truly principled, dedicated leader does not look for excuses but for effective methods of resolving the problems that arise.

Very much depends on how exactingly and thoroughly a leader and communist analyzes the situation in his allotted section and how objectively, honestly, and truthfully he reports on the level of his subordinates' combat skill and the state of military discipline. Unfortunately, that is not the case everywhere. Certain commanders and political workers are sometimes more concerned about imaginary, ostentatious well-being than the real thing. Instances of misrepresentation, the concealment of flagrant misdemeanors by subordinates, and the breakdown of material have still not been eradicated. Such negative phenomena were observed in the activity of Major A. Ivanov, former commander of an aviation unit, for example. Senior officers and the political organ reacted keenly to distortions in the style of this officer's work and he was dismissed and made accountable to the party. A stern approach but a just one.

Every instance of lack of principle, and particularly of dishonesty, shown by people entrusted with the rights of leadership should be fairly assessed. However, the other aspect must not be forgotten--that is, the all-around support of honest, principled, self-critical officers. Of course, a self-critical report about failings in a unit, subunit, or on a ship does not free a commander from personal responsibility for shortcomings. But in general the kind of atmosphere must be established in which officers are not afraid to speak the truth about the real state of affairs, whatever it may be. For that to happen, senior officers, staffs, and political organs must examine the problems of military life in greater depth and be more effective in their organizational work at local levels. It is of great significance to make the correct choice of criteria for judging command cadres' activity. It is the easiest thing of all simply to count up the number of misdemeanors discovered and the penalties imposed, as sometimes happens. Such an approach not only does not produce a realistic picture, it also encourages some commanders and chiefs to cover up violations. The state of affairs in units and on ships and the work of command and political cadres must be assessed comprehensively, from all aspects.

Showing principledness and exactingness is easier for the commander who is supported actively by the party organization. The duty of Communists in units and on ships is to comprehensively help commanders and chiefs to establish their authority and put the requirements of the regulations into practice. There is much to be gained from having party committee and bureau sessions

hear reports from leading personnel who are Communists, particularly young ones, on improving their work style. There must also be thorough and principled discussion about this during the present report and election campaign in party organizations.

Criticism and self-criticism should be developed more actively. Official positions and titles cannot be used to justify the fact that a leader who is a Communist and who has permitted omissions to occur in work and in personal conduct is exempt from criticism by the party. Those commanders and chiefs who take professional criticism as a personal affront and as an encroachment on their authority should be resolutely put right on the matter.

We are living at a special time now. In the Army and Navy, as throughout the country, the preparation for the 27th CPSU Congress is in full swing. While campaigning for a fitting greeting to it, people in formations, units, and on ships are seeking reserves for combat training and for strengthening military discipline and order. Commanders and chiefs are expected to set the tone here. Primarily by means of active organizational work combined with high principles and exactingness toward themselves and others. This is one of the main elements of the restructuring toward which the party is guiding us and an important condition for steady progress toward new heights in combat readiness.

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CSO: 1801/39

ARMED FORCES

EDITORIAL: IMPROVE NIGHT COMBAT TRAINING

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Aug 85 p 1

[Editorial: "Night Training"]

[Text] This happened 40 years ago during the Manchurian Strategic Offensive Operation. On a rainy August night in 1945 troops of the Red Banner 1st Army commanded by Col Gen A. Beloborodov attacked the enemy suddenly without artillery preparation after stealthily negotiating the taiga thickets. The attacks by our forward detachments were so swift that the enemy didn't have time to offer organized resistance.

There are many such examples in the Army and Navy's combat annals, and each of them is valuable in a special way to those who train and indoctrinate personnel, because today the importance of night training as one of the decisive factors for attaining victory in combat has never before been as great. This is a result both of the level of development of technology capable of decreasing the unfavorable effect of hours of darkness on unit and ship actions, and by changes in the nature of modern combat, the outcome of which is dependent to an ever increasing extent on the matter of who has surprise on his side. The proper action is taken by those commanders who, in training subordinates, proceed from the assumption that not to take advantage of the night for continuous attacks against the enemy under present-day conditions means giving the enemy the initiative.

It is common knowledge that the effectiveness of actions by Army and Navy forces during the hours of darkness increases with the development of illumination equipment, night vision devices, and radar and other technology. Meanwhile, the work of a commander and staff in night combat, whether it be attack or defense and actions at sea or in the air, has many features which a person must know and consider. In particular, in the darkness it is more difficult to control subunits, units and ships, maintain their coordination, and carry out measures to mop up the aftermath of the enemy's use of weapons of mass destruction. The resolution of problems of combat, technical, and logistical support is hampered under conditions of limited visibility. It stands to reason that night combat places special demands on the training of commanders, staffs, chiefs of combat arms and services, and all personnel. One of the priority tasks is to take maximum advantage of the summer training period to perfect that training.

The battalion commanded by Maj A. Gaponov and other subunits of Tank Regiment "X" of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, for example, organize the training of soldiers of different specialties for night actions imaginatively and with consideration of the nature of modern combat and local conditions. Tactical exercises here provide for active operations during hours of darkness, and night tank gunnery practices are widely practiced. The personnel learn to act both with and without the use of night vision equipment, to make effective use of the capabilities of equipment and weapons, to perform reconnaissance, to attack and defend, and to perform repair and periodic technical servicing work in the darkness. Special emphasis is placed on practicing problems in controlling forces and resources under conditions of limited visibility, and in the interaction of tankmen with motorized riflemen, artillerymen, and soldiers of other combat arms.

Unfortunately, that is how matters stand far from everywhere. There are units and ships where the increased demands on night training still are not fully considered in organizing it, indulgences and oversimplifications are allowed, and proper concern is not shown for having the people learn with greatest effectiveness to use equipment and weapons under conditions of limited visibility. Such deficiencies are present, in particular, in the battalion commanded by Capt S. Antonov and in some other subunits of Unit "X" of the Red Banner Central Asian Military District. Night training classes here are held at times during hours of daylight. As a result, not all the personnel are sufficiently trained in getting their bearings at night on mountainous desert terrain, moving along a compass bearing, performing reconnaissance, and using night vision devices, illumination equipment and light signalling equipment.

Experience shows that lessons of shifting from day to night actions and vice versa are not worked precisely enough in some units and aboard some ships. In disengaging from night combat, some commanders show no concern for organizing reconnaissance, replenishing supplies, strengthening air defense and so on. Not all officers are able to assure concealment of preparations for night actions, organize their light support using artillery, aviation and other combat assets, or precisely coordinate the actions of mixed forces by time, line and missions. Some artillery and air commanders are insufficiently prepared for executing missions of illuminating and designating targets in the interests of motorized rifle and tank subunits. There are deficiencies in organizing night marches and troop movements.

An improvement in the quality of the personnel's night training depends to a decisive extent on the methods proficiency of the directors of training activities. It is important for the practice of lessons involving the organization of night combat, control of forces and resources, and the use of equipment and weapons to be constantly within the field of view of the organizers of officers' professional training. Assemblies, instructional methods and demonstration problems and exercises, and briefings must be used more actively to this end. We must ensure that the officers' independent methods training is under constant supervision. We must be more objective in teaching the directors of training activities to organize competition in night training tasks and norms and we must be more active in arming them with experience of foremost personnel.

The training facility requires further improvement. All target fields, weapon compounds, unit firing ranges and moving-target ranges must be so equipped that they can be prepared quickly for night classes. It is important to see to it that all training areas are adapted for practicing lessons in the combat coordination of mixed forces and assets.

Faultless combat teamwork, efficiency and discipline of the personnel represent a necessary condition for achieving success in night combat. All forms of party-political work must be used in the process of training soldiers to instill in them high combat activeness, boldness, readiness for actions under difficult conditions, and intolerance toward stereotyped methods of combat. It is important to think out carefully the political support to each night problem and exercise, to see that party and Komsomol members set a personal example in mastering the art of night combat, and to resolutely fight against indulgences and oversimplifications in combat training.

Making effective use of the time remaining to the end of the training year for improving the night training of Army and Navy forces means achieving a further improvement in their combat readiness.

6904
CSO: 1801/2

ARMED FORCES

REPLACING PLATOON OFFICERS WITH SERGEANTS

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 Aug 85 p 2

[Article by battalion commander Maj M. Gladko, Order of Lenin Moscow Military District, under the rubric "Discipline is the Foundation of Combat Readiness": "NCO's Can Do a Great Deal"]

[Text] It happened that a number of platoon commanders were absent for some time in the company commanded by Capt A. Reshetnyak. Performance of their duties naturally was placed on the NCO's. I recall what a guarded attitude some officers of the battalion headquarters took toward this forced measure initially. By the way, it is no secret that I myself at first was not without anxiety as I would go to this company in the mornings.

We generally had no special complaints about the subunit NCO's previously and according to many indicators the junior commanders here stood out in the best light.

Nevertheless, some of the officers would "back up" their junior assistants now and then when performing important tasks. But here NCO's were commanding almost the entire company... We had never before had such a situation. The question arose on the battalion staff about who was to sponsor the company in order to avoid misunderstandings, so to speak.

True, at that time we just didn't discuss this matter completely. I don't remember now who it was who suddenly suggested another solution to the problem: to assume that the NCO's themselves were capable of coping with the tasks given them; in short, to arrange relationships with the junior commanders on the basis of complete trust in them. The suggestion was adopted with difficulty, almost as an experiment.

The NCO's were informed of our decision on the following day. Recommendations for improving practical skills were drawn up with consideration of each one's character and the strong and weak aspects of his training. They were made known to the junior commanders in individual conversational briefings.

There was a specific, frank, direct conversation. For example, Jr Sgt A. Dozorov, company Komsomol organization secretary and one of the most experienced junior commanders, was advised to be more restrained and tactful in

dealing with young privates. Sgt M. Kuznetsov was advised to be more demanding toward subordinates. Jr Sgt I. Grishchenko was advised to be more attentive toward the soldiers' requests and needs. Kuznetsov and Grishchenko were assigned to perform the duties of platoon commanders, and so the conversation with them was more thorough.

Necessary work also was performed with the company Komsomol aktiv. The difficulty of the moment was explained to the activists and they were advised to be more decisive in supporting the demanding NCO's and to demand a stricter accounting of those who didn't serve as an example in training.

In evaluating what was done by the company in those days, one now thinks with pride about the fact that it was the NCO's who assumed the greater part of concerns at an important moment. I will note that discipline was kept at the proper level in the company all the while and that the order of the day was strictly fulfilled. And in general the very same atmosphere was maintained in the collective as before, when all company officers were present.

By the way, it is also to the credit of each NCO that they successfully coped with the tasks assigned them. Capt Reshetnyak sets the example for officers in working with junior commanders, and he demands that quality be the principal factor in this work. For example, if an instructional methods class is being held, it must provide the junior commanders with maximum knowledge and skills needed in their work with subordinates. If an NCO meeting or conference is held, truly current issues of interest to squad commanders and deputy platoon commanders must be raised there. If it is a question of competition results, the personal successes and deficiencies of NCO's must be considered in the light of their subordinates' achievements and failures...

That is what the officers try to do and this of course played no small part in the fact that the NCO's successfully passed a serious test.

Of course, as the battalion commander, I would like that to be done in all sub-units, but we have not yet succeeded in doing this. Take for example the companies commanded by Capt G. Mukhin and Sr Lt V. Bukatov. The question of demoting G. Shepetskiy and O. Bekasov, who had begun to violate military discipline, from the position of squad commander and stripping them of sergeant rank had to be raised here quite recently. Unfortunately there are also other junior commanders here who are not distinguished by personal example.

It cannot be said that Capt Mukhin and Sr Lt Bukatov aren't working with them. Judging from reports, the companies have held all classes and practices with NCO's prescribed by the plans and appropriate indoctrination work is being performed with them, but this apparently is not enough. Moreover, the NCO's far from always have the opportunity to display their command qualities in practice, and so they are given little trust.

Something similar also is seen in the repair platoon commanded by Sr WO [Praporshchik] V. Salikov. For example, one can judge where excessive coddling of junior commanders leads from the following fact. On being left in the place of the platoon commander who left on a routine leave, his deputy

Sgt A. Dergachev was not even able to conduct physical training properly. That should come as no surprise, for until now the deputy platoon commander had worked only on technical matters and no one even reminded him of his command functions. Sr WO Salikov took everything on himself, and so Dergachev hadn't learned to work with people. A junior commander's authority is out of the question here.

By the way, about authority. Lately we have begun to monitor NCO disciplinary practice more strictly. It turned out that they aren't making full use of the rights given them by the regulation. This matter was considered at the next conference with NCO's. In addition to the fact that we tried to convince them of the need to use all rights for commanding subordinates and for imposing disciplinary punishments on them prescribed by the regulation in order to indoctrinate the personnel, it was decided that the senior commander must not decide a single matter, such as commanding a soldier, without the participation of squad commanders and deputy platoon commanders. The authority of NCO's immediately became noticeably higher in subordinates' eyes.

As a matter of fact, need we mention how a soldier cherishes, for example, such an incentive as a short leave? He knows that the first person given the right to request this is the squad commander. The soldier of course will try to appear as a good lad in front of his immediate superior.

And how much a good word said about an NCO (before a unit formation, for example) elevates his authority! We also try to take account of this in our work. Recently, for example, a letter addressed to me came from a local internal affairs section: privates I. Gorelov and V. Chernetskiy had detained violators of public order. I presented the soldiers with valuable gifts in the presence of battalion personnel. I didn't pass up a chance to note here that they were the subordinates of Sgt M. Kuznetsov, who had put in much work for their indoctrination. I know that everything is not going smoothly in Kuznetsov's career. Later I would have a special conversation with him on this subject, but now a good word above all in front of the formation!

I think that evenings for honoring the best NCO's also can play more than a minor role in strengthening the authority of junior commanders.

There are many other problems connected with elevating the role of NCO's in strengthening discipline and order which must be resolved in the near future. Among them also are those which go beyond the bounds of a single subunit or unit.

For example, why is it so difficult to achieve what would appear to be a fundamental matter: to have a private salute a sergeant? In the battalion we try to keep a strict eye on compliance with this regulation requirement. We punish those who violate it. We also demand an accounting of the NCO's if they ignore violations of regulation requirements about saluting. Of course there have been certain improvements in this plane, but it also happens where we have to begin all indoctrinational work with a private anew following his latest pass from the unit location. The person on pass returns from the city almost with a complaint against the commander: in other units allegedly the privates don't salute the sergeants and the patrol ignores this...

What can you say here? One thing is clear: the problem of strengthening discipline and order and of elevating the role of NCO's in this matter is quite many-sided. It has to be resolved comprehensively through the common efforts of commanders, party and Komsomol organizations, and garrison officials.

It is also worth thinking about how to elevate the role of the daily detail in maintaining regulation order. Much here depends on the NCO's, who as a rule are assigned as duty NCO's for the traffic control point, the motor pool, and the company. It is the company duty NCO, for example, who, in the absence of officers, has to become the guardian of order in the barracks, so to speak. But often he, like the other appointed persons on the daily detail mentioned above, is in fact out of a job because his functions are assumed by so-called "responsible" persons. The subunit commanders are far from always at fault for this, as is customarily believed. Instructions on this score often come from higher echelons.

The practice of higher supervisors invading (if it can be thus expressed) the disciplinary practice of junior commanders also does harm. I said that the request for a soldier's leave begins with the NCO for us. But it also happens, unfortunately, that no one consults him in deciding the question of a leave. For example, a private has distinguished himself in a training activity in the presence of a general from higher headquarters, and the latter gives him a leave right there without consulting with anyone. The general ordered it, and that's final. No one is interested in the fact that the squad commander has complaints about this private in service or that he has punishments.

The training year is coming to a close. Strenuous military work is in full swing at the firing ranges, at tank training areas, in classrooms and in motor pools. The NCO's are next to the privates everywhere that the fate of pledges is being decided today. They have a great role to play in training and indoctrinating the personnel and in strengthening military discipline, and our trust in them must be even greater.

6904
CSO: 1801/2

ARMED FORCES

MILITARY HARVEST CONTINUES

Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 4 Sep 85 p 3

[Article by unnamed TASS correspondent: "Strenuous Harvest-Time Work"]

[Text] Harvest-time is strenuous and difficult. Colonel General I. D. Isayenko, chief of the central supply department of the USSR Ministry of Defense, tells a TASS correspondent about the harvest and how it is progressing in the military sovkhozes.

Today, crucial tasks face the military sovkhoz workers. The main task, which deserves concentrated attentions, is a further increase of agricultural and live-stock output. At present, as was noted at a CPSU Central Committee Politburo meeting, it is necessary to considerably step-up the work rate in order to harvest all products grown without losses, to process and deliver them into winter storage, to sow the winter crops in a timely manner, to prepare good seeds and to provide the farms with fertilizers.

One very important situation should be stressed: a majority of our farms, which had insufficient harvesting and mowing rates last year at this time, have now much improved their showings. The effect was immediately obvious -- by 1 September for the first time we prepared more fodder than in any previous year. This means that a good base has been established for fulfilling and surpassing the coming year of the 5-year plan's goal for live-stock production.

One should especially note the harvesting work and fodder preparation organization on the farms of the Turkestan, Moscow, Leningrad, and Carpathian military districts, and the Black Sea Fleet. A one and one-half year reserve of coarse fodder had already been established by September in the Volga and Moscow military districts. The laying-in of rich fodder is being conducted at a good rate everywhere.

The sovkhozes of the Volga and Moscow military districts and others are surpassing the established quotas for grain production. A high food grain yield has been achieved on these farms. Thus, for example, the Baltic Fleet's sovkhozes have received 40 metric centners from one hectare -- this is an outstanding showing.

Bread grain harvest work is rapidly shifting into the Siberian, Ural and Northern Kazakhstan regions. It is important that the farms of these zones be included in the timely crop harvest.

The rates of all field work is now higher than last year's and the main point is that they not be reduced. Every day hundreds of tons of grain and coarse and rich fodder are going into the granaries. One should remember: a fine day feeds one for a year.

13110
CSO: 1801/11

ARMED FORCES

LETTERS TO KRASNAYA ZVEZDA EDITOR, RESPONSES

Reformed Alcoholic's Story

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 4 Aug 85, p 2

[Letter from Maj N. Nikolayev: "The Awakening: A Candid Word From an Individual Who Succeeded in Overcoming a Destructive Weakness for Alcohol"]

[Text] I am writing to the editors for the first time. Not for help and not for advice. I want to talk about something painful, about how drunkenness is ruining people's lives, about what people are led to by faintheartedness, by a weakness for alcohol, by the false hope that it is perfectly safe to drink "in moderation." I know from more than just hearsay how insidious this delusion is. There was a time in my life when I was too involved with alcohol, when my life was like a bad, lethargic dream.

I must admit it took me some time to decide to tell about myself. It was not an easy thing to stir up the past, not so easy to recall that black interval in my life. My heart tells me not to remain silent, however, tells me that what I say might force someone to stop and think, help someone take a closer look inside himself, derive the necessary conclusions....

I was not familiar with alcohol until I was approximately 26 years old.

Everything went well at the beginning of my career as an officer. The platoon which I commanded was unfailingly a leading platoon, an excellent one. I was soon advanced and given an early promotion. What a beautiful time that was! How enthusiastic I was about the work! I would sometimes go home from the job, and my thoughts would not be about resting, but about the men, about the next day, about new matters and tasks. I did not dream that time would pass and everything would change in my life, that instead of the accustomed expressions of gratitude I would hear criticism, receive reprimands and lose count of the penalties.

It all began with a shot glass of alcohol. I "became fond" of alcohol without even noticing it. If the battery fired well, this had to be celebrated. If the men passed an inspection, this was also an excuse. And then there would be the birthday of a colleague, a new star on the epaulets of a comrade.... In general, there were plenty of excuses. I did not understand at that time,

of course, the danger which lay behind these "celebrations" or the abyss toward which I was sliding. And naturally, I did not consider myself a drunk. If someone had called me that, I would have been offended to the depth of my heart. Just what was wrong with those drinking sessions? This was not affecting my service performance, after all. It only appeared that way, however. It was affecting my performance. And how! I did not recognize this fact until later, to be sure, after time had passed. And so I became drawn into it. And when tragedy struck my family, I knew where to look for comfort. In the bottle....

The men were aware of everything which was happening with me. They knew about my weakness. They reproached me, scolded me, warned me that I had gone astray and that I would soon be sorry, would wake up but it would be too late. I felt that they were simply picking on me, that it was impossible to suit everyone. In addition, after all, I was not the only one. I was drawn to those who were good to me, who empathized in the "100-gram" manner. This was my circle of friends. A small one, but it existed. I thought that these were real comrades, loyal and dependable, who knew how to listen and comfort me, to offer sensible advice. I could pour out my heart to them. In short, things went from bad to worse.

Life went on, however. And the day-to-day service continued along with it. I no longer had my former enthusiasm, however. How could I, with my mind intoxicated? Because of this, quarrels became a constant thing on the job and in the family. There was no longer any point in even dreaming about advancement. I also lost my professional skill and prestige previously earned.

It would probably not be quite fitting for me to criticize the collective for not trying hard enough to save me. I would like to talk about certain things, however. Specifically, the "critiques." I would sometimes be blasted at a party meeting, but some time later the very one who had criticized me, who had lambasted me with angry tirades, would comfort me. Don't take offense, he would say. We have to do this. All of us understand, after all. It could happen to anyone....

I myself am mostly to blame, of course. I was unable to comprehend, to assess the situation, to overcome my ruinous passion and take control of myself. In the end, I left for a new station with my record of penalties and with uncomplimentary references.

I was received warily. Naturally, I attempted to make a good impression, to demonstrate that it was no accident that I was an expert at live launches. I succeeded in the beginning. I soon slipped up there as well, however. My fondness for alcohol had become a habit. So strong a habit that even the concerted efforts of my new colleagues could not help me to see the light, to wake up from the bad dream, to make my way out of the alcoholic fog. People stopped trusting me to carry out serious jobs. Some time later, the subunit communists frankly and adamantly raised the question of whether I was worthy of being a party member. Their decision was unanimous: I was not.

This was a terrible shock for me--I hope the reader will believe that these words are sincere. When I turned in my party card, I thought with bitterness: Now no one needs me. Now everyone will wash their hands of me, a lost person who has ruined his own life.

How I underrated my colleagues, my fighting comrades! How lucky I was that at this most difficult phase of my life, there were people of high principle and compassion alongside me! Real communists.

After that memorable party meeting at which the harsh sentence was pronounced, Major I. Yermolov came up to me.

"This is what faintheartedness leads to," he said. "Remember well the words you heard here. The comrades believe that you can turn over a new leaf."

I. Yermolov, Lieutenant Colonel N. Rudakov and other officers frequently spoke with me and visited me at home. This was not just fleeting concern for my situation, not the formal conduct of indoctrinational measures and not even simply a sincere desire to help me. They were fighting for a human being.

I awoke from the nightmare. I eliminated alcohol from my life once and for all. My awakening might appear to have been too easy to some people. This was not so, of course. It was difficult to break the habit, to give up the circle of buddies I had formed. But I told myself firmly: No! I know now that a human being can handle anything, can do anything. Especially when he has real comrades around him. I am grateful to them with all my heart.

A year later I received my much "belated" next military rank. And 2 years later I was promoted to a higher position. All that time I worked like one possessed. I was ashamed to admit that I was not a party member. I believed that I would never again belong to its ranks. And when I shared my pain with my comrades, I was told that everything depended upon me. Quite a lot of time passed before I could bring myself to request acceptance into the party. I was told that I was worthy. Those who recommended me, who accepted me into their ranks included almost all of those who had at one time withdrawn their trust from me. Major N. Yermolov wrote one of the recommendations.

Everything is normal today. I am satisfied with the service, and I know that people are satisfied with me. I am a member of the party bureau and deputy chairman of a people's control group. I have repeatedly been commended by command for my successes. In short, I live a vigorous and interesting life. Now and again, however, I find myself thinking about how much was lost in my life because of the destructive habit. Unfortunately, many of the losses are irreplaceable. To be honest, thinking about this is what prompted me to begin writing.

I once heard the following frivolous statement: "Just think, if I stop drinking, everything will immediately be straightened out." In the first place, however, it is far from easy for some people to stop drinking. In the second place, one's life and service certainly do not straighten out at once. And losses are inevitable: damage to service prospects, personal prestige, the climate in the family and one's personal health.

I cannot reconcile myself to the fact that there are still people in our collective threatened by the same danger which I once brought on myself. These are isolated cases. On the whole, our group of officers is healthy and strong. One of the senior officers was frequently punished for his fondness for alcohol, however. I would like to mention one other officer, a captain. I know him as a fine specialist with an excellent mastery of the equipment, as a good indoctrinator who knows how to get through to the men. He had good prospects. His fondness for alcohol ruined his life, however. He has now been removed from his position. It would be difficult to say whether the officer will succeed in finding in himself the strength to put an end to his destructive desire.

Naturally, and I have already said a great deal about this, we work vigorously with people inclined to abuse alcohol. They are carefully watched. The collective can do a lot. And it does. A great deal depends upon the individual himself, however, upon how thoroughly he can grasp the danger of becoming obsessed with the bottle. It is very important for him to listen to his real comrades, to try to look ahead and realize what the harmful weakness can lead to.

The last thing I would like to say is that I have a son growing up. He dreams of becoming an officer. He and I frequently talk about this, about the meaning of life. He does not know about that black interval in my life--he was not capable of understanding at that time--and I honestly do not want him to learn about it. If the editors decide to publish my letter, I would therefore ask them to change the name. (The editors have fulfilled this request).

Malfeasance of Cooperative Officials

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Aug 85 p 2

[Article by Maj Gen Justice V. Konovalov, judge advocate of the twice Red Banner Baltic Fleet: "For 'Needed' People: A Case Out of Legal Practice"]

[Text] On a sunny day in May a truck loaded with bricks drove through the gates of the depot in the unit commanded at that time by Lieutenant Colonel V. Lavrinenko. The trip permit and the waybill indicated the destination--an apartment building construction site. The dump truck did not reach the construction site, however. The leader of the team of bricklayers, who never received the bricks, expressed his thoughts about what occurred to the section chief in writing. And the bricks were in fact located. There where stalls were being built for a garrison garage cooperative.

This prompted workers from the judge advocate's office to look into the activities of the cooperative, which was headed by Captain 2nd Rank (Reserve) N. Safin. They uncovered violations involving more than just the use of materials.

Under the law, the board of a cooperative performs its duties on a volunteer basis. That is, without pay. In violation of this and at the initiative of

Safin himself, he was paid 120 rubles monthly at the expense of the shareholders beginning in May 1977 and 165 rubles per month beginning in December 1984. Nor were A. Merkulov, board chairman, and treasurer N. Korolev overlooked. They received 70 and 80 rubles per month respectively. Furthermore, the cooperative's funds were kept not in a bank, as required by the law, but in the personal savings accounts of Korolev and Merkulov.

The law was also violated over and over again in the acceptance of new members into the cooperative. Only around half of the applications and reports submitted by servicemen and employees of the Navy and reviewed by a special commission were satisfied. On the other hand, the "green light" was given to so-called "needed" people having nothing to do with the service or any work in the garrison units. The following are members of the cooperative, without any justification: V. Barskov, director of a personal service combine, A. Brezgin, inspector of fish storage facilities, N. Martinovich, chief of a motor vehicle service station, V. Galkin, a worker in the GAI [State Motor Vehicle Inspectorate] and others. Some people have even come into possession of a garage with false documents. These include Lieutenant Colonel V. Lutsay, Captain 2nd Rank V. Solovey and others, as an example.

These and other facts demonstrating that the situation in the cooperative is clearly not normal and that its operation is not being monitored were reported to the garrison chief. The garrison chief has reported to the judge advocate's office that the acceptance of outsiders into the cooperative... "has been drastically reduced" and that those guilty of malfeasance and the squandering of construction materials... "have been sternly admonished."

Is this not too superficial an approach to the matter? Or are the "needed" people needed also by garrison officials?

Poor Training Assemblies

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Aug 85 p 2

[Letters to editor and response: "For the Sake of 'Checkmarks': Three Letters About How Training Assemblies Should Not Be Conducted"]

[Text] Dear editors I am an officer in the reserve and was recently called up for a training assembly. I returned from the training disappointed. The commanders of the fire platoons trained, acquired new knowledge and perfected their practical skills. There was nothing for me to do, however. In the unit and on the base where the assembly was conducted there is none of the equipment which I should be mastering. I learned that there was a station of the right kind in an adjacent unit and more than once asked Major A. Monakhov, Captain V. Levitskiy and Lieutenant V. Yashin, my chiefs, to arrange for classes in my specialty there. Nothing came of it. The comrades responsible for organizing the training assembly did not want to burden themselves with the extra work.

During the assembly I was paid the regular salary for my job in production, and I also received TDY pay. It was indicated at the military commissariat

that I received training at the assembly, where I supposedly refreshed and added to my military expertise. In fact, however, the time was spent in less than the best possible manner.

Lieutenant (Reserve) V. Puzynya,
Order of Lenin Moscow Military District

Senior Lieutenant V. Utin, an officer in our battalion and commander of a radio platoon was sent on TDY for advanced training to a training assembly at one of the military schools. Utin was called up from the reserve and greatly needs to enhance his knowledge. We hoped that the officer would receive a great deal there.

Our hopes were not justified, however. At the assembly, Senior Lieutenant Utin was exempted from the classes and put to preparing displays and visual aids. As an expression of "gratitude" for this the officer was released from the assembly ahead of time and given a document indicating that he had passed the exams on military radio and radio-relay stations with a rating of "good"....

Senior Lieutenant Utin's conduct is something to be discussed separately. We can take action against him here. But someone should assess from the standpoint of principle the harmful practice of taking officers away from classes at a training assembly.

Major V. Kovalenko

Respected editors: I thought a long time about whether or not to send this letter. The assembly has already ended, and nothing can be done about it. I decided to send the letter any way. After all, at some time a new group of NCO's and soldiers will be sent to this sort of assembly. These will be men with a higher education and preparing themselves to become reserve officers. Are they to be trained in the same manner as we were trained?

We were forced to devote most of our time to repairing a snack bar, filling out documents for graduates of the training subunits and equipping a combat glory room and a mess hall.

The exams were only a formality. We never laid eyes on the artillery systems which we were supposed to be studying. There was only one copy of the manual for a training group of several dozens of men. We did not always even get our hands on it. And we will have to command platoons, should the need arise.

Master Sergeant Yu. Lalikhov,
Red Banner Ural Military District

From the editors: Training assemblies are an effective means of perfecting the knowledge and skills of the personnel. Within a relatively short period of time the participants can markedly improve their special training, if every hour and every minute are strictly accounted for.

The authors of the letters published today were called up for assemblies of various types and on various levels. They all have the same thing to report, however: poor organization of the training process. Judging from these and other letters, control over the organization of training assemblies is poor in some places, and the practical and written exams are conducted as a formality. Rigid order must be established in this matter in the interest of combat readiness.

Officers' Poor Conduct

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Aug 85 p 2

[Response to KRASNAYA ZVEZDA article: "In the Grip of Conceit and Arrogance"]

[Text]. A reply has been received from the chief of the formation's political section to the critical report published on 18 June with the above title. It states the following:

The facts cited in the newspaper article were discussed at a unit officers' meeting on 24 June. It was brought to the attention of Lieutenant Colonel V. Urtayev that we must rely upon the party and Komsomol organizations and use public opinion in the indoctrinational work. A party commission under the political section has reviewed Communist V. Urtayev's personal file. He was issued a reprimand for poor indoctrinational work and rudeness to subordinates, and this has been indicated on his record card. A reprimand was also issued to Communist V. Chupakhin, who has demonstrated lack of principle in the organization of party work.

Lieutenant Colonel V. Urtayev has drawn the correct conclusions from the criticism and is altering his workstyle. The political section is taking steps to establish in the unit a wholesome moral climate, a situation promoting principled and objective criticism and self-criticism.

Registration, Draft Irregularities

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 11 Aug 85 p 2

[Follow-up on KRASNAYA ZVEZDA article: "Evasion"]

[Text] Colonel B. Yarmukhamedov, Military Commissar for the Kazakh SSR, has responded to the article published on 28 June with the above title. This is what he reports:

The newspaper article was discussed at a conference of supervisory personnel at the military commissariat in Alma-Ata Oblast. Documents regulating the registration and induction of the youth for active military duty have been studied with officers, warrant officers and employees performing this work. Major V. Dobrovolskiy, chief of the division of the Kalininckiy Rayon Military Commissariat in the city of Alma-Ata, has been brought to party and

disciplinary accountability for negligence in the performance of his service duties. Lieutenant Colonel I. Yemelyanov, Kalininskiy Rayon Military Commis-sar, has been strictly admonished about the need to increase control over the service performance of subordinates.

An investigation by the judge advocate's office, states a reply sent to the editors by Colonel of Justice V. Ozemblovskiy, judge advocate of the Red Banner Central Asian Military District, has established the fact that T. Khianbarov, a resident of Alma-Ata, was not included on the roster of draftees and was not registered at the military commissariat in 1981 due to negligence on the part of workers in Housing Management Office No. 32 of Kalininskiy Rayon. Major V. Dobrovolskiy did not verify the list of names.

T. Khianbarov did not report for registration when he was supposed to, and after graduating from an industrial tekhnikum he began deliberately evading induction for active military duty. This fact was established by an investigation conducted by the judge advocate's office of Kalininskiy Rayon in Alma-Ata. The criminal case against T. Khianbarov has been turned over to a people's court.

A reply has also been received from V. Dzhumanbayev, chief of the Alma-Ata City Trade Administration, in one of whose associations T. Khianbarov worked. It reports that B. Gazizova, director of that association, and its senior personnel inspector have been sternly admonished for deficiencies in the keeping of records on persons subject to the draft.

Letters of Complaint, Follow-Up

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Aug 85 p 2

[Letters to editor and follow-up: "Steps Have Been Taken in Response to Reports From Readers"]

[Text] I was hurt by an injustice which was done to me, and this has forced me to write to the editors. I was injured on the job and forced to get treatment. No one from our party organization visited me while I was ill, however, or inquired about my health. Furthermore, I was illegally dismissed. And I am a veteran of the Great Patriotic War....

N. Pavlov,
Vladivostok

The editors sent this letter to the Political Directorate of the Pacific Fleet. Vice Admiral A. Slavskiy, member of the fleet's Military Council and chief of its Political Directorate, reported that the facts were confirmed. N. Pavlov has been reinstated at his former job, and the trade union committee has provided him with material assistance.

Those who committed the violations have been strictly punished. Major Ya. Met, depot chief, has been removed from his post, expelled from the party and recommended for release into the reserve for his disregard for servicemen, for neglecting the indoctrinal work and for deficiencies in his service performance. Captain V. Plyukhin, secretary of the party organization, and employee V. Omelchenko, chairman of the trade union committee, have been sternly admonished for callous treatment of a veteran of the war and of the unit.

I have encountered numerous difficulties during my many years of service in the Air Defense Forces. I did not think that they would arise when I was discharged into the reserve, however. Almost 2 months have gone by, but my personal file has still not reached the Bratsk City Military Commissariat. I am not receiving a pension and I cannot obtain work.

Captain (Reserve) V. Litvintsev,
Irkutsk Oblast

The editors contacted the command element and requested that the facts stated in the letter be checked out immediately. Major General Yu. Mukhin reported that they had been totally confirmed and that the individual to blame had been severely punished. A stern reprimand was issued to Major V. Bondar, assistant chief of staff of the line unit. Comrade Litvintsev's personal file has been sent to the Bratsk City Military Commissariat.

Like all Soviet people, I greeted decisions on stepping up the campaign against drunkenness and alcoholism with great satisfaction. Unfortunately, we are still not waging a real campaign against this enormous evil here. Certain citizens--V. Burenkova, among others--make homebrew, but no steps are being taken against them. I feel that this is not right....

M. Vologzhanin,
Smolensk Oblast

Respected Comrade Vologzhanin: The editors sent your letter to local authorities for action. The fact which you cited was confirmed. V. Tsurenkov, deputy chairman of the Ispolkom of the Dorogobuzhskiy Rayon Soviet of People's Deputies, has informed us that citizen V. Burenkova has been fined 50 rubles and sternly admonished by a people's court for making homebrew and for keeping the paraphernalia for that.

I am a disabled war veteran. Unfortunately, officials on the sovkhoz where I live have been insensitive to my needs and provide me with no kind of assistance. I have been totally unable to get a pension.

S. Botsiy,
Vladimir Oblast

Respected Comrade Botsiy: A. Tagiltsev, secretary of the Kovrovskiy Rayon Committee of the CPSU in Vladimir Oblast, to whom we sent your letter, replied and stated that steps have been taken. V. Andreyev, division director, and Z. Loginov, chairman of the trade union committee on the Kovrovskiy Sovkhoz, have been sternly admonished for insensitivity toward a war veteran. Steps have been taken to have a disability pension established for you and to have a motor vehicle assigned to you.

My son has paid his debt to the homeland honorably and conscientiously. He received numerous expressions of gratitude. He was accepted into the Communist Party while in the army. At my son's request, our rayon military commissariat sent to the unit for his party and service records so that he could enroll at an institute. There was no reply for a very long time. When the records finally arrived, they contained not a single good word. Help me get to the bottom of this.

M. Batkova,
Sasovo, Ryazan Oblast

Respected Mariya Petrovna: We too were curious as to how a young communist recently accepted into the CPSU, according to the records, could have so many shortcomings. The editors immediately contacted the command element and requested that all of this be thoroughly investigated.

Major General V. Lukin reported to us that at the request of the Sasovskiy Rayon Military Commissariat, nonobjective party and service references were sent for your son Yu. Batkov. Captain Baturin, the subunit chief of staff, and Warrant Officer Pyatnitsa, the platoon commander, were to blame. Taking advantage of the absence of the political worker and the secretary of the party bureau, they wrote up references which indicated shortcomings generally uncharacteristic of a young communist and a Komsomol activist. Warrant Officer Olshanchenko, member of the party bureau, prepared the party reference on the basis of the service record.

All of the guilty parties have been punished. Captain Baturin and Warrant Officer Pyatnitsa have been reprimanded. Communist Olshanchenko made a report at a party meeting. Objective references for your son have been sent to the institute.

Follow-Up on Two Articles

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 20 Aug 85 p 3

[Text] "Behind the Letter is a Person"

A leading article published with the above headline on 18 May cited a case in which Colonel V. Kurdov did not seriously investigate a complaint about malfeasance by Major V. Londarev, commander of a military construction detachment.

Colonel V. Katunin and Lieutenant Colonel V. Durnev reported to the editors that Colonel V. Kurдов had indeed not been objective in assessing the situation in the detachment. Major Londarev, a member of the CPSU, has been issued a reprimand, which is to go into his record, for malfeasance, for violating financial discipline and for rudeness to subordinates. By decision of a comradely court of honor of senior officers, the process has been started to demote him one level in position.

"Not the Right Style"

The above was the title of a report from Colonel A. Yurkin, which was published on 23 July. It discussed shortcomings in the organization of the training process in the motor vehicle company commanded by Captain O. Veresov.

Major General of Justice A. Perepelitsa, judge advocate of the Leningrad Military District, reported to the editors that the judge advocate's office has investigated the facts stated in the report. Captain O. Veresov has been disciplined and fined for malfeasance. In order to eliminate the causes of and the conditions contributing to the infractions mentioned in the newspaper, it has been recommended that the district command element look into the responsibility of officials who are supposed to be monitoring Captain O. Veresov's performance.

Misuse of Naval Personnel

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Aug 85 p 2

[Letter to editor from Capt Lt N. Pripisnov, ship commander, Red Banner Pacific Fleet: "Who Needs Such Plans?"]

[Text] I hesitated a long time before writing to KRASNAYA ZVEZDA. I decided to, since the problem pertains not just to the ship which I command, but to others as well.

The superior chiefs require that we ship commanders compile a daily combat and political training plan which shows what every serviceman will be doing throughout the day. This is a legitimate requirement, and it is being carried out.

Unfortunately, the next day these plans fall completely apart. Almost every day personnel are detailed to work in various organizations at the order of the superior chiefs, the same ones who demand daily plans from us. These organizations are most frequently the military trade facility, the park, the rayon consumer cooperative base and so forth. If we try to object, we are told: "This is by order of such and such a chief"! And it has to be carried out.

But what is the point in compiling plans which one knows will not be carried out? And why ignore the Navy Regulations, which state in black and white that the number of personnel detailed to work on shore must never exceed one-fourth of the ship's crew (Article 885)? Our personnel are sometimes

"mobilized" almost to the last man for various cleaning and maintenance jobs, and then only several men from the duty and watch service are left on board. How can we speak seriously about planned and regular training in the specialty in such a situation or about effectiveness for the drills specified in the plans?

Our unit, and I write this with bitterness, is a lagging unit in the fleet. One of the reasons for this, in my opinion, is the excessive diversion of personnel away from shipboard activities which has been going on for more than a single year now.

Low Prestige of Warrant Officers

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 Aug 85, p 2

[Article by Gds Warrant Officer Chubarov, senior company technician, under the rubric "The Newspaper Has Spoken--The Reader Continues the Discussion": "The Warrant Officer is the Officer's Assistant"]

- [Text] "Where to Get a Good Sergeant Major" (16 July 1985)
- "Being Close to the Personnel is a Party Quality" (7 August 1985)
- "And the Time Was Wasted" (26 July 1985)

The activeness of our readers has increased markedly of late. The editor's mailbag increasingly contains letters written in response to newspaper articles. The readers express their opinions on the matters brought up, state their approval of or disagreement with the author's stance, direct attention to additional aspects of the problem and offer their own solutions.

In my opinion, a very important problem is brought up in Lieutenant Colonel V. Zhitarenko's article "Where To Get a Good Sergeant Major." The author correctly states that warrant officers do not willingly accept the position of subunit sergeant major. However, he attributes this to the fact that the sergeant major is not properly rewarded for his difficult work: he is certainly not given priority for an apartment, travel and accommodation warrants for sanatoria and resorts are issued to him extremely rarely, and so forth.

These are contributing factors no doubt, but I believe that the most important thing is something else.

The other day I heard a conversation which troubled me greatly. At unit headquarters they were discussing candidates to head several teams for the performance of an important assignment. Several warrant officers were among those recommended to head the teams.

"Never!" was the reaction of one of the senior officers making the decision, when he learned about this. "If we want the mission to be carried out well and on time and to have no infractions of military discipline, we should put officers in charge of the teams...."

I felt offended for my colleagues, the warrant officers, who were being discussed at headquarters. Why shouldn't we trust such experienced specialists, such industrious and resourceful men? The officer who spoke so unflatteringly of them probably did not know that dozens, hundreds, of such missions have been carried out by warrant officers during their years in the army--and carried out without a hitch. So why should they have been referred to in this manner?

It was my offended feelings which evoked this first reaction. There are those among us, of course, who permit themselves to show up late for work, let us say. Not all of us conduct ourselves in a worthy manner when off duty. Some of us can be seen out of uniform and some of us are not outstanding in our conduct. This casts a shadow upon all of us, of course, but we should not fail to look at the specific individual in that shadow.

And so, it is not a matter of material benefits or incentives and not a matter of apartments. Incidentally, almost all of the warrant officers in our unit have comfortable apartments. I have a 3-room apartment, for example. What more could one need for a family of four? We have everything we need in the garrison for improving our cultural level, for rest and relaxation. The training base permits us to improve our knowledge and our military skills.

I do not want to say that all of the officers are biased against us. I am very grateful to Major Yakov Vladimirovich Vyrodov for the attention I receive from him, for example. He is now a battalion chief of staff, but he formerly commanded the company in which I took my first steps in the position of senior technician. Our company was commanded for a long time by Guards Captain Vyacheslav Alekseyevich Nikiforov, who taught me a great deal about the service. He had a great deal of trust in me and believed that the warrant officer is the officer's first assistant.

In general, however, the warrant officers do not enjoy much prestige in the unit. Less is demanded of us than of the officers. Just let an officer perform only satisfactorily in firing or operating a combat vehicle in a final exercise. He will not avoid a talk based on principle both with his senior chief and with his fellow officers. If a warrant officer does this, however, it is as though this is to be expected. I know that warrant-officer councils have been set up in certain units, which meet to discuss service problems. We still do not have such a council in our unit. I believe that one should be set up, however.

...Today, at unit headquarters, they were again deciding whom to trust with the mission--this time a fairly simple one--of serving as commander of a vehicle being sent out on a long trip. An officer was designated....

Training Vessel Negligence, Slighting of Veterans

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 Aug 85 p 2

[Text] "They are getting to the bottom of it..."

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA published a critical letter from Captain 2nd Rank V. Shirokov with the above title on 17 July. It was about unsatisfactory organization of the training process on a training vessel in unit "X" of the Pacific Fleet.

Rear Admiral B. Petrunya has reported to the editors that the newspaper article was discussed at a conference of staff and political section officers. Captain 2nd Rank V. Nikonov was sternly reprimanded and penalties were imposed upon Captains 3rd Rank N. Tkachuk and V. Khugayev for negligence in the use of the UTS [training vessel]. The unit commander's assurance that such things would not happen in the future was taken into account. The staff has assumed control over the scheduling of classes and drills on the training vessel.

"They Saw a Veteran Off Into the Reserve..."

The above was the title of an article by Lieutenant Colonel A. Manushkin, which was published on 30 July of this year. It spoke of callousness on the part of officials when subordinate officers are discharged into the reserve.

Lieutenant General of Aviation G. Danilov has reported to the editors that the facts cited in the article were confirmed. The newspaper article was discussed at a conference of leading personnel. Major General of Aviation I. Volkov was admonished for violating the procedure for awarding certificates of gratitude to the veteran. A stern reprimand was issued to Lieutenant Colonel A. Vinnichenko, and he has been brought to party accountability.

False Statements, Accusations

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 31 Aug 85 p 2

[Article by Col P. Chernenko, KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent, Red Banner Far East Military District: "As Revenge for Strictness: Follow-Up on a Letter"]

[Text] I was waiting for Warrant Officer V. Galun in the unit commander's office. I was reading his letter to the editors again (for the umpteenth time!). It stated that he, Vladimir Galun, was fighting against shortcomings in the unit and telling the commanders the truth to their faces, and that he was being released into the reserve for this. He needed help, he said, in his struggle for justice. The fate of an individual was involved. I went over once again also the negative occurrences which the warrant officer was allegedly sparing no effort to combat.

Time passed, but Warrant Officer Galun had still not appeared. I learned later that he was rushing... somewhere else. I did not manage to meet with him that first day of my TDY. Warrant Officer Galun did not show up for work, something which had frequently happened also in the past. This altered my opinion of the letter's author as a fighter against shortcomings....

When we did meet, the conversation did not go well at first. Galun answered all my questions abruptly and kept glancing nervously around the office. It was apparent from everything that the warrant officer did not feel very comfortable. He had depicted himself in the letter as a champion of order and

a victim of injustice, although he knew very well that everything he had written was, to put it mildly, untrue. It turned out that Galun's pen had been guided not by acute suffering because of his impending separation from his beloved service in the army and not by a desire to help the commanders establish regulation order in the unit. His letter to the editors had a different purpose: "to slam the door" as he left.

The conversation gradually warmed up. The warrant officer talked with forced indifference about his infractions--specifically, about the repeated drinking sprees, which were what had led to the sad finale, his early discharge into the reserve. It was as though the discussion were not about him but about someone else, someone in whom he had not the slightest interest. Was he fond of the bottle? Circumstances had forced him to be. Had he failed to show up for work? There were valid reasons for this. The day before, for example, he had been looking for a job....

And what about the negative occurrences cited in the letter? One could not say that there are no deficiencies in the unit in which Galun served (when this article was being prepared for press, the warrant officer had already been discharged from the Armed Forces). The unit does not try to cover them up, however. On the contrary, each infraction of military discipline or negligence in the performance of duties is properly assessed, and those who do not set an example in the training in the service are held strictly accountable. Specifically, prompt steps had been taken in the unit with respect to all of the shortcomings which, according to Galun's letter, had been concealed.

In short, he did not succeed in "slamming the door." No one took his bait of fabrication. The fact is, however, that I have traveled on official duty more than once to follow-up on letters like this, in which the facts are reversed. This involved the spending of state funds, wasting worktime and taking people away from their work in the military units. The facts were not confirmed, and the author of the letter, as in this case, calmly departed the military collective--satisfied, judging from everything, that he had succeeded at least somewhat in "spiting his superiors" and made the commanders and political workers worry. And I wonder whether we are not winding up these cases too soon. Why should we not hold the authors of such letters more strictly accountable, in accordance with the law? After all, no matter how slander is disguised, it is still slander....

I came across another matter while investigating Galun's complaint. It turned out that he had already been a warrant officer in the past. His desire to serve in the military came to him while he was working in the national economy after completing his regular duty. At the military commissariat Galun promised to serve honorably and conscientiously. His request was granted. Galun soon forgot his promise, however. His performance was neither good nor bad. He changed assignments several times within a 5-year period. He did not settle into any of them. He drank heavily and did not report for work. And he was discharged into the reserve.

A year later, however, he was in the army again. It would be difficult to say what workers in the Seryshevskiy Rayon Military Commissariat in Amur Oblast and the commanders and political workers were thinking when they decided to call up a second time an individual who was negligent and given to drinking. A fact is a fact, however: They violated party requirements for resolving a personnel issue and demonstrated a lack of demandingness and lack of principle.

11499
CSO: 1801/8

AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

Mi-26 HEAVY LIFT HELICOPTER ENGINE

Moscow KRYLYA RODINY in Russian No 6, 1985 (Signed to press 14 May 85) pp 22-23

[Article by Lt Col V. Bratunets, military engineer, under the rubric "For the Youth, On Aviation Equipment": "The Giant Mi-26 Helicopter: The Power Plant"]

[Text] The power unit on the Mi-26 helicopter consists of two D-136 gas-turbine engines designed by V.A. Lotarev. The D-136 provides 11,400 hp for maximum take-off performance, 8500 hp for normal and 6100 hp for cruising. Should one of the engines stall, the other automatically increases its performance and assures continued, safe horizontal flight. This is one of the advantages of the unit.

The D-136 engine's design consists of a double-shaft, axial, double-step compressor with 13 stages. An intermediate housing is installed between the stages of the low-pressure compressor (LPC) and the high-pressure compressor (HPC). An annular combustion chamber is located immediately behind the HPC, and behind it are, in sequence, two stages of turbines (one high-pressure, the other low-pressure), a double-stage idle turbine and the exhaust.

The compressor rotor is actually two separate rotors, each of which is driven by its own turbine. The compressor and the low-pressure turbine are rigidly connected by a shaft and form the low-pressure rotor. The high-pressure rotor is formed in the same way.

All three rotors (low-pressure, high-pressure and the idle turbine rotor) have different, optimal rotating speeds and when the engine is running they are linked only by a gas-dynamic bond. This has made it possible to avoid the need for the extra elements (function and pawl couplings) used for starting piston engines on helicopters. Each of the rotors has two bearing supports.

Use of the double-step compressors has made it possible to achieve a high level of efficiency for the stages, to provide necessary reserves of gas-dynamic stability for the compressor, and to start the engine with a low-powered starter.

Good engine efficiency has been provided by achieving good parameters for the gas-dynamic cycle.

Structurally, the engine consists of nine main modules (blocks), each of which is a complete technological unit and except for the main, eighth module, can be dismantled and replaced in the engine without taking apart adjacent modules (Fig. 2) or removing the engine from the helicopter. This design feature makes it possible to rapidly get the engine operating again in case of damage to or failure of assemblies or parts. This considerably reduces servicing outlays and ultimately lowers the cost of the engine.

The main engine assemblies are a compressor, an intermediate casing and drives, a combustion chamber, a turbine and an exhaust duct.

Compressor: axial, double-step. It compresses the air and feeds it to the combustion chamber. It consists of a six-stage transonic low-pressure compressor (LPC) and a seven-stage subsonic high-pressure compressor (HPC).

Each step consists of an intake guiding device, a rotor, a stator and blow-off valves.

Both rotors are of drum-disc design. The blades and discs are connected by dovetail shanks.

Each of the stages is connected to its turbine by a shaft. It is important to note that the shaft of the low-pressure rotor runs through the hollow shaft of the high-pressure rotor.

Intermediate Casing With Drives: forms the connecting duct from the LPC to the HPC and houses the assemblies for them, as well as the front mount for the HPC rotor and the front engine suspension band. It consists of a casing, gear-boxes and the central drive housing. The assemblies are driven by the high-pressure rotor, which activates them simultaneously with the delivery of air to the high-pressure compressor for starting the engine.

Combustion Chamber: necessary for producing the air-fuel mixture and providing the highest possible degree of combustion. It consists of the housing, a flame duct, a fuel manifold with fuel nozzles, and igniters. The flame duct is a welded, annular one with openings for the passage of additional air.

Turbine: triple-shaft, reaction, designed for driving the low- and high-pressure rotors and the rotor of the free turbine, which in turn drives the main and tail rotors by means of a freewheeling clutch, reduction gears and transmission shafts. It consists of a single-stage low-pressure turbine (LPT), a single-stage high-pressure turbine (HPT) and a double-stage free turbine.

Engine Outlet Channel: made up of the flow-through section of the housing for the free turbine supports and the exhaust device.

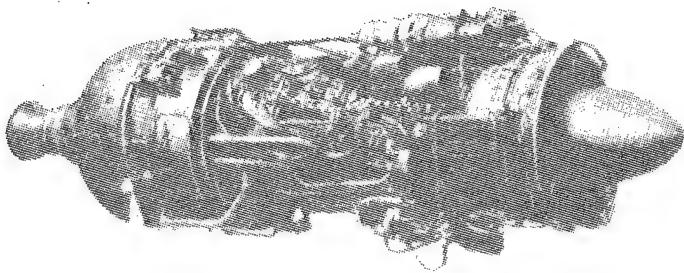


Figure 1. D-136 Engine

Starting The Engine

The engine is started automatically by accelerating the high-pressure rotor with an SV-36 compressed-air starter mounted on the engine's gear-box (Figure 3). The compressed air is provided by a TA-8V or TA-6V compact auxiliary power unit mounted on the helicopter. The engines can also be started with compressed air from ground sources or from an adjacent engine operating on the helicopter by tapping air from the fourth stage of the high-pressure compressor (HPC).

Compressed air from the auxilliary power unit is fed to the SV-36 compressed-air starter, which transmits the power developed to the high-pressure rotor through a pawl coupling. When the high-pressure compressor (HPC) reaches the required rpm, the SV-36 compressed-air starter is automatically switched off by a BPR-2 set of overspeed govenors.

The engine starting cyclogram is effected by means of an APTs-45A automatic starting panel. When the "start" button is pushed it revves up the high-pressure rotor, the warming-up (preparation for operation) begins, priming fuel is delivered 9 seconds later and 20 seconds after that, operating fuel, which mixes with air, ignites and produces gas with large dynamic parameters. Passing through the turbines, the gas revves up the high- and low-pressure rotors and that of the free turbine. In the start-up process the engine goes into the "low-gas, ground" mode.

Engine Operation Principle

As the high-pressure rotor rotates and then the low-pressure rotor, air from the atmosphere enters the engine intake after passing through a dust filter (PZU) on the helicopter. The air is then compressed in the low-pressure compressor and fed to the high-pressure compressor, where it is greatly compressed and fed to the combustion chambers. There it is mixed with incoming, finely atomized fuel and forms an air-fuel mixture which forms a gas jet with great kinetic energy. The jet is thrust against the turbines, where its energy is transformed into mechanical action used for turning the low- and high-pressure rotors by the corresponding low- and high-pressure turbines, as well as for

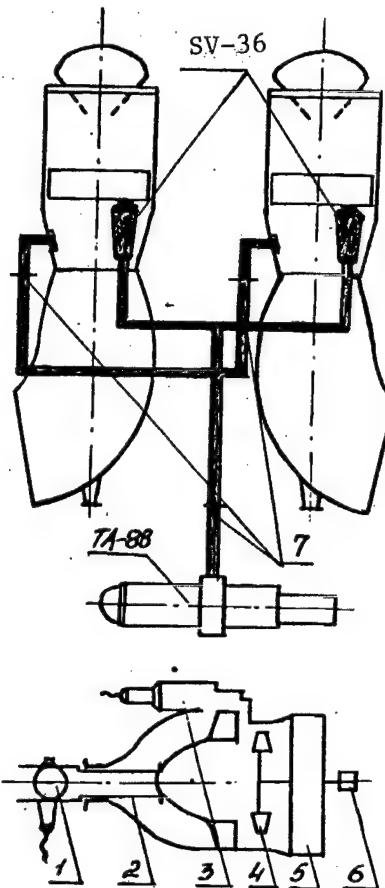


Figure 3. Basic Diagram of Engine Start-Up:

1. Choke (emergency);
2. Air flow valve for compressed-air starter;
3. Starter control unit;
4. Impeller of starter turbine;
5. Reduction gear;
6. Starter dog;
7. Check valves

turning the helicopter's main and tail rotors with the free turbine by means of the freewheeling clutch, reduction gears and transmissions shafts.

After passing through the flow-through section of the turbines, the gas energy is reduced, and its temperature and pressure drop. In the exhaust the gas expands and its pressure drops to that of the atmosphere.

While we are discussing the D-136 engine's operating principle, we must describe in greater detail the specific features and advantages of the double-step compressor, compared with the conventional gas-turbine engine with one compressor.

One of the characteristics of the compressor is its degree of compression (P_k). Without going into the details of the increase, let us say that while such

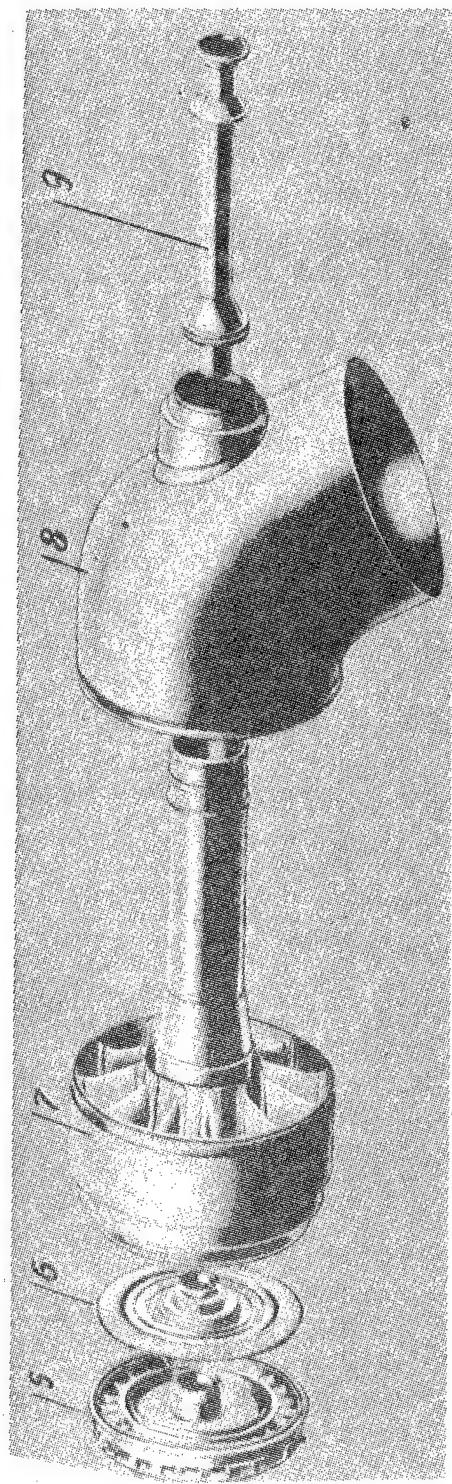
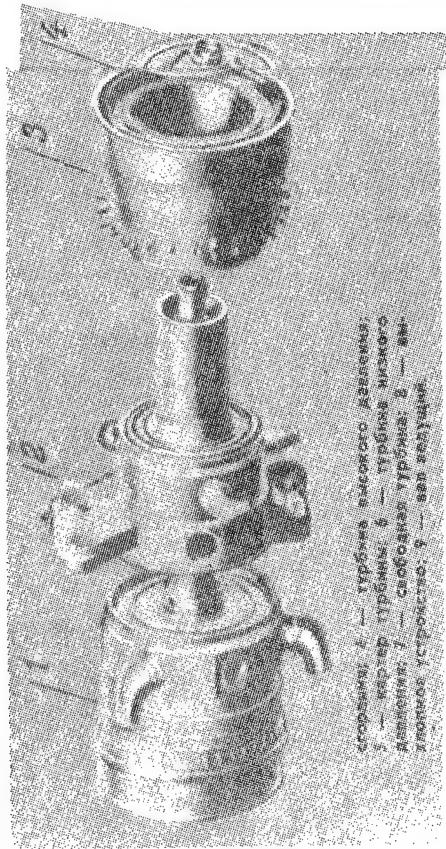


Figure 2. Structural Modules of Engine

Key:

1. Low-pressure compressor
2. High-pressure compressor, gear-box,
3. Intermediate casing
4. Combustion chamber
5. Turbine casing
6. Low-pressure turbine
7. Free turbine
8. Exhaust
9. Drive shaft

engines as the D-25V and TV-2-117 have a Pk of 5.6 and 6.6 respectively, the D-136 has a Pk of 19--that is, 3 times as great.

Increasing the degree of compression in a compressor is not an easy matter at all and is complicated by a large number of structural circumstances. For example, it turned out to be impossible to achieve good gas-dynamic parameters for the engine in attempts to increase the compressor rpm or even to significantly increase the number of stages, which should make it possible to increase the Pk. A lack of synchronization may develop in the functioning of the compressor stages in certain operating modes and in the case of adverse conditions for air intake into the engine. This disturbs its gas-dynamic stability and causes surging, an undesirable phenomenon which can cause powerful vibrations or even engine failure.

In order to avoid this phenomenon, various devices are used for improving the stability of the air movement in the engine. They include air by-pass strips in the D-25V engines and revolving blades on the guiding devices of the TV2-117 engines, but use of the double-stage compressor proved to be the most effective solution. The rotors in its two stages have different rpm, and this provides for the optimal functioning of each. It was this which made it possible to increase the gas-dynamic stability of the compressor as a whole and up to a certain point, "to remove" the surging.

Adjusting the blades of the input guiding devices on a stand and when necessary, blowing off air through by-pass valves, as well as achieving optimal operating modes for the two stages and creating better conditions in the flow-through section of the compressor, made it possible to achieve a high Pk.

Highly compressed air entering the combustion chamber from the high-pressure compressor and combining with finely atomized fuel forms an air-fuel mixture capable of developing great kinetic energy upon combustion. This energy is transformed into mechanical action in the turbines, and this is ultimately translated into great engine power.

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11499

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AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

AIR FORCE COMMANDERS WRITE ON AIR FLEET DAY

Colonel General of Aviation Pankin

Baku BAKINSKIY RABOCHIY in Russian 18 Aug 85 p 3

[Article by Col Gen Avn V. Pankin, Chief of Main Air Force Staff, first deputy commander of the Air Force: "The Motherland's Mighty Wings"]

[Text] On 18 August our motherland and the Soviet people ceremoniously mark USSR Air Fleet Day. This holiday is an inspection of the achievements of Soviet aviation and of the successes of Soviet pilots and navigators, scientists and designers, workers of the aviation industry, the large army of DOSAAF members, and of all those who, by their selfless labor, are creating the might and soldierly and labor glory of the Soviet Air Fleet and improving the mighty wings of the motherland.

This holiday is special. It is illuminated by the unfading radiance of the 40th anniversary of the Soviet people's great victory over fascist Germany and militaristic Japan and is being marked in an atmosphere of exceptionally high socio-political and labor activity of the popular masses caused by preparations for the next, 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet people are working with increasing persistence and inspiration as they strive to accomplish successfully the planned tasks for the current year and the five-year plan as a whole.

The interests of the motherland's armed defenders as well as of all Soviet people are met by the constructive and profoundly realistic course of the party which envisions the acceleration of socio-economic development of the country on the basis of scientific and technical progress. The development of aviation is one of its most brilliant manifestations.

The Communist Party and the revolution's leader of genious--Vladimir Il'ich Lenin--stood at the sources of Soviet aviation's birth. He sagaciously determined the role and place of the Air Force in the defense of the state of the victorious proletariat. The All-Russian Board for the Control of the Republic's Air Fleet was instituted as early as December 1917. And the mass formation of air detachments was begun in January 1918. Communists from among the military pilots, flying observers, and aviation mechanics who were boundlessly devoted to the revolution and ready to give their lives for it formed the nucleus.

After the Civil War, under conditions of hostile encirclement and the constant threat of military attack on our motherland the Communist Party and the Soviet government were tirelessly concerned about the strengthening of the first socialist country's defensive capability. The organization of the air fleet was declared a national matter. Successful accomplishment of the industrialization program permitted organizing the scientific and technical base and creating its own Soviet aviation industry. During these years new high-speed airplanes created by the collectives of the design offices of A. A. Arkhangel'skiy, A. N. Tupolev, S. V. Il'yushin, N. N. Polikarpov, and A. S. Yakovlev climbed into the sky of the Country of Soviets.

A broad system for training aviation personnel was created. The new generation of Soviet aviators, having received the baton from the veterans of the Civil War, achieved ever newer successes. In implementing the order of the Communist Party--to fly farther than all the others, faster than all the others, and higher than all the others the Soviet pilots in first-class Soviet airplanes accomplished outstanding flights and captured world records for distance, speed, and altitude of flight. They showed convincingly that our motherland has not only excellent equipment, but also personnel who are capable of accomplishing any mission.

In accomplishing their international duty, our volunteer pilots fought bravely in the sky of Spain, Mongolia, and China. They demonstrated boldness, courage, and valor in the battles at Lake Khasan and on the Khalkhin-Gol River.

During the fiery years of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 Soviet aviation made a worthy contribution to the defeat of fascist Germany. Not one important operation of our troops was conducted without the participation of aviation. In close coordination with the Ground Forces and the Navy as well as independently they smashed the enemy on the ground and in the air in all battles and on all fronts, exerting a substantial influence on the course and outcome of the armed struggle.

The increasing combat might of our aviation is eloquently shown by the following data. If 200-500 airplanes participated in the operations of 1941, in 1943-1945 it was up to several thousand and, in the Berlin operation--7,500 airplanes.

On the Soviet-German front the fascists lost 77,000 airplanes, that is, two-thirds of all the airplanes produced by the German aircraft industry during World War II.

The Air Force's contribution to the defeat of imperialist Japan was significant.

The motherland estimated the valiant hawks at their true worth--more than 200,000 Soviet aviators were awarded orders and medals, 2,420 pilots were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, 65 men were awarded this title twice, and A. Pokryshkin and I. Kozhedub--three times.

The experience of the Air Force's combat operations in winning air superiority, the smashing of big enemy forces, and the combat support of attacking troops is priceless property for us even now.

The results of World War II taught the ruling circles of the imperialist states little. Led by the United States of America, they initiated the working out of new plans directed against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. A network of military bases began to grow around us rapidly. Aggressive blocs were knocked together one after the other. American imperialism emerged as the main force of international reaction and militarism. Its main goal is the destruction of socialism and the attainment of world domination.

In order to secure the country against sudden attack, the Communist Party and the Soviet government are adopting the necessary measures to see that the organization and technical equipping of the Soviet Armed Forces and the level of the personnel's combat readiness, combat training, instruction, and indoctrination meet contemporary requirements.

In recent years the appearance of our military aviation has changed unrecognizably thanks to the unremitting attention and concern of the CPSU and the Soviet government and the persistent labor of scientists, designers, engineers, technicians, and workers.

The basis of the Air Force's combat might is made up of large units and units which are equipped with supersonic missile carriers and bombers having a large lift capacity and radius of operation. The aviation missiles of these airplanes, including those with nuclear charges, permit destroying enemy objectives without entering the zone of action of his air defense weapons.

The present generation of aviators is continuing the glorious traditions of the frontline fighters in a worthy manner. They are confirming their loyalty to their military and patriotic duty by practical deeds.

The names of Heroes of the Soviet Union V. Gaynutdinov, G. Yeliseyev, I. Zhukov, Ye. Zel'nyakov, V. Ochirov, V. Pavlov, P. Ruban, V. Kot, and V. Shcherbakov rank with the names of the glorious Soviet aces of the wartime sky. Military pilots are demonstrating courage, heroism, and a developed sense of responsibility when accomplishing their international duty in Afghanistan.

Soviet aviation is the cradle of cosmonautics. The first cosmonaut--the citizen of the USSR and military pilot Yuriy Alekseyevich Gagarin--emerged from the winged formation of aerial fighters. Other Soviet cosmonauts began the assault of outer space right behind him. Today cosmonauts Vladimir Dzhanibekov and Viktor Savinykh are standing their watch successfully.

The workers of the Orders of Lenin and the October Revolution Civil Aviation of the USSR are greeting Soviet Air Fleet Day together with the military aviators. The wings of Aeroflot are now stretched over 90 countries of the world.

In the training of future military aviators, masters of aviation sport, and in the military-patriotic indoctrination of the youth a large role belongs to DOSAAF which unites more than 100 million people in its ranks.

The Soviet fatherland grew its mighty wings thanks to the tireless concern of the Communist Party. The military aviators are responding to this concern with a further rise in combat readiness, effectiveness, and quality of all combat

training missions and are mastering contemporary weapons and aviation equipment. In the same formation as the fighting men of the fraternal countries which are participants in the Warsaw Pact, they are reliably ensuring the defense of socialism and peace.

Colonel General of Aviation L. Batekhin

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 18 Aug 85 p 2

[Article by Col Gen Avn L. Batekhin, member of military council and Chief of Air Force Political Directorate: "The Motherland's Reliable Wings"]

[Text] Today, when the Soviet people are marking Soviet Air Fleet Day, the military aviators experience a special sense of pride for the fact that the country entrusted formidable contemporary combat equipment to them and entrusted them with guarding their native sky inviolably. They are filled with the resolve to justify this great confidence which was rendered by the party and the people. The aerial fighters are proud of the love with which the Soviet people are surrounding their winged defenders.

But the holiday is not only ceremony. It is first of all a unique exacting inspection of the combat readiness of aviation units and large units. Today this inspection acquires special significance since it is being conducted during the period of large-scale preparations for the 27th CPSU Congress when the Soviet people, fervently supporting the party's decisions which are directed toward acceleration of the country's socio-economic development, are seeking ways for their most rapid realization. The scale, innovative nature, and boldness of the tasks assigned by the party are inspiring the military aviators for initiative soldierly labor and stimulate them to attain the maximum return from each flight and each training minute to raise even higher the combat readiness of the Air Force.

We are living in an alarming time. The forces of imperialism and reaction are nurturing plans for unleashing a new world war and are shifting the arms race to outer space. The international situation requires of us aviators vigilance and constant readiness for the immediate repulse of any aggression from wherever it may originate.

The Air Force plays an important role in ensuring the reliable defensive capability of the country. In recent years, it has climbed to a qualitatively new stage and constantly uses the fruits of scientific and technical progress. Today air units are equipped with contemporary aviation complexes. Our aviation possesses such qualities, which are important under contemporary conditions, as all-weather capability and round-the-clock combat employment, the ability to accomplish difficult operational and tactical missions, high maneuverability, precision in launching strikes, and the ability to coordinate effectively with the Ground Forces and naval and air defense forces.

These qualities are ensured not only by the presence of contemporary aviation equipment. People form the basis of the Air Force's combat readiness. Profound ideological conviction, devotion to the motherland, lofty moral-combat and psychological qualities, skillful mastery of weapons and combat equipment--

these are the distinguishing features which determine the true appearance of today's aviator. The routine days of the Air Force are filled with numerous instances of courage, self-control, and frequently even the heroism of the aerial fighters.

For example, squadron commander Lieutenant Colonel V. Ochirov accomplished an exploit when accomplishing his international duty in Afghanistan, rescuing a group of our men who had been surrounded by Dushmen in the mountains. V. Ochirov was awarded the lofty title of Hero of the Soviet Union. The courage of pilots V. Gaynutdinov, I. Zhukov, Ye. Zel'nyakov, V. Pavlov, P. Ruban, V. Kot, V. Shcherbakov, and others whose names are the equal of the names of the glorious aces of the war years was marked with gold medals in the postwar years. The contemporary aerial fighters, just as all men of the Soviet Armed Forces, are guarding with honor and worthily continuing the glorious combat traditions of the wartime fighters.

Let us turn to history. Soon after the Russian inventor naval seaman A. Mozhayskiy built the first airplane in the world, the thought arose concerning the expediency of employing aviation for military purposes. The Russian pilot P. Nesterov became the founder of aerobatics and marked the beginning of the airplane's employment for the destruction of aerial targets.

The Red Air Force which was born by the socialist revolution strengthened and matured together with the Soviet fatherland. V. I. Lenin and the Communist Party attached tremendous national economic and defense significance to aviation.

The successful accomplishment of cardinal socialist transformations in the country permitted creating a firm scientific and material-technical base for the rapid and quality development of the Soviet Air Fleet. Our motherland became one of the mightiest air powers in the world in an unprecedentedly short historic period. In the 1930's all people of the planet were carried away by the exploits of Soviet pilots M. Vodopyanov, I. Doronin, N. Kamanin, V. Molokov, and M. Slepnev in rescuing the Chelyuskinites as well as of the crews of V. Chkalov and M. Gromov who accomplished nonstop flights from Moscow across the North Pole to America in 1937.

In accomplishing their international duty our volunteer pilots fought bravely for the freedom of the Spanish and Chinese peoples. They demonstrated courage and valor during the conflicts at Lake Khasan and on the Khalkhin-Gol River which were provoked by the Japanese militarists.

The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people of 1941-1945 against fascist Germany was a severe test. One realizes this especially clearly just now, from the height of the four postwar decades which have been lived through.

In a difficult and long armed struggle the Soviet people accomplished an exploit the equal of which was unknown by history. A significant role in the smashing of the German fascist troops belongs to the Air Force. In close coordination with the other combat arms they took a most active part in all the biggest operations.

From the first to the last day of the war the Soviet pilots fought bravely with the hated enemy, in so doing displaying high combat skill and mass heroism

unprecedented in history. The fascist vultures long remembered the sky of Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk, the Kuban, and the Donbass. The entire world then learned the names of the glorious Soviet fighter pilots--V. Talalikhin, A. Alelyukhin, A. Pokryshkin, I. Kozhedub, the Glinka brothers, and G. Rechkalov; bombardiers A. Molodchiy, V. Yefremov, V. Senko, I. Polbin, and N. Gastello; attack aircraft pilots N. Abdirov and V. Rogalskiy; and many other glorious winged sons of the Soviet fatherland.

The heroic workers of aviation--engineers, technicians, junior aviation specialists, signalmen, and men of the aviation rear area--made a large contribution to the common cause of victory over the enemy.

During the war years our pilots accomplished more than three million combat sorties and conducted hundreds of thousands of aerial battles. The enemy suffered a tremendous loss in personnel and equipment. Fifty-seven thousand enemy airplanes were destroyed in air battles and in air strikes against airfields alone. Air Defense and Naval pilots inflicted tangible damage on the aggressors.

The motherland evaluated the exploit of our aviators at its true worth. More than 200,000 of them were awarded orders and medals, 2,420 fliers were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, 65 men were awarded this decoration twice, and the famous aces--now Marshals of Aviation I. Kozhedub and A. Pokryshkin--were cited with this lofty distinction three times.

The purposeful party-political work which was conducted in the air units continuously and in any situation was a powerful weapon in the struggle with the hated enemy. The political personnel showed themselves to be remarkable organizers of party-political work under combat conditions. Relying on the party organizations, together with the commanders they inspired the military aviators to soldierly exploits and carried them along with flaming word and personal example.

The war years became the property of history long ago, but the glorious pages of exploits and victories are not an archive, but an arsenal. The fliers of the postwar generations carefully preserved and are preserving the priceless property--the experience of the frontline fighters. Their exploits teach courage and summon to the heights of moral and professional perfection.

The holiday of the Soviet fliers coincides with the period of the greatest heat of summer combat training. The soldierly skill of the fliers is forged and polished during strained routine training days. Thus, the men of the Guards fighter-bomber Red Banner regiment commanded by Guards Colonel A. Pokhodin distinguished themselves on exercise "Kavkaz-85" which took place recently. The pilots demonstrated good air training and the ability to coordinate closely with the Ground Forces and launch strikes against the "enemy" accurately.

The success of the Ground Forces' offensive operations was furthered in considerable measure by aerial reconnaissance data which were delivered efficiently to the command by the fliers of the subunit where officer N. Gordiyenko is the political officer. Here constant and purposeful party-political work is conducted and is directed toward making the human factor more active and increasing

the return from each pilot or specialist. Here they understand well that under conditions of contemporary battle it is difficult to overestimate the importance of accurate and timely reconnaissance data which can be attained by even one crew.

The Guards bomber Red Banner air regiment commanded by Guards Colonel A. Tsarkov is confidently occupying a place among the leading Air Force collectives. The fliers of this unit are the initiators of socialist competition in the Air Force in the current training year and are filled with the resolve to accomplish the lofty obligations which have been assumed.

We are proud of the leaders in combat training and socialist competition, among whom are officers V. Vladimirov, A. Gedyukhin, V. Denisov, V. Kondratyev, Ye. Kozin, V. Kraskovskiy, V. Platunov, V. Solomentsev, M. Marakasov, B. Morgunov, G. Filatov, and many, many others.

The number of experts of training, excellent crews, subunits, and units, specialists with a higher qualification, and masters of combat employment in the Air Force is growing. Much is being done by commanders, political organs, and party and Komsomol organizations of the air units and subunits for a further rise in military skill, ideological tempering, and the quality mastery of contemporary combat equipment. But the military aviators are not dwelling on what has been achieved and, as required by the April (1985) plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, are constantly looking for unused reserves and possibilities to improve the work of all flights and of each individual person. Constant attention is required by the problems of the further strengthening of military discipline and improving the work of the administrative machinery and party-political and indoctrinal work. It is necessary to increase efforts for the further and more complete mastery of all capabilities of contemporary aviation equipment. As yet, not everything has been done for the accomplishment of such important tasks as ensuring flight safety and the search for reserves to economize in material resources by increasing the quality and effectiveness of combat training. The success of the matter depends on a conscientious attitude toward it by each military aviator, whatever post he may occupy, as well as on coordination and clarity in the work of large and small collectives. In short, we know the tasks facing us, understand their complexity, and see ways to overcome difficulties which arise.

Today the Soviet Air Force is strong as never before. The fatherland has its mighty wings thanks to the tireless concern of the Communist Party and its Leninist Central Committee for strengthening the defensive might of the Soviet state. Invested with the high confidence of the party and the people, the Soviet flyers, in one formation with all Soviet servicemen, are reliably standing guard over the achievements of socialism, are vigilantly guarding their country's sky, and tirelessly raising combat readiness.

Major General Shubin

Moscow ZARYA VOSTOKA in Russian 18 Aug 85 p 3

[Article by Maj Gen Eduard Shubin, Chief of Air Force staff, Red Banner Transcaucasus Military District: "The Wings of the Motherland"]

[Text] Each year, in marking Soviet Air Fleet Day our country and the entire Soviet people honor the makers and creators of aviation equipment, the military fliers, Aeroflot workers, DOSAAF sportsmen-pilots, and all those who are multiplying the glory of the Air Fleet of the Country of Soviets by their selfless labor.

Soviet aviation has a remarkable history; it is the offspring of the people, their glory and pride. We are rightly proud of the fact that the scientist and inventor, A. Mozhayskiy, created the first airplane in the world and that such outstanding scientists as D. Mendeleyev, N. Zhukovskiy, S. Chaplygin, K. Tsiolkovskiy and other theoreticians of aviation, cosmonautics, and missile technology stood at the sources of aerial navigation.

The victory of the Great October opened a new stage in the development of Soviet aviation. Its creation and development is directly connected with the name of the founder and leader of the Communist Party and the Soviet government, V. I. Lenin. It is namely to him that the basic decision belongs concerning the organization of the Red Air Fleet in which he prophetically saw not only an important type of transportation and communication under peaceful conditions, but also a powerful means for the defense of revolutionary achievements. Therefore, during the Civil War the main efforts of aviation were concentrated on those fronts from which the greatest danger threatened.

In the 1930's the successful accomplishment of socialist industrialization permitted the creation of a firm scientific and material technical base for the rapid development of the young state's air fleet. The Soviet Union became one of the world's leading states in the field of aviation in a short time and emerged in first place for the length of air lines. During the years of the first five-year plans Soviet pilots in Soviet airplanes accomplished a number of outstanding long-distance flights and established more than a third of the world records. The heroic feat in rescuing the Chelyuskinites in 1934 remains in the people's memory forever. Its participants--pilots A. Lyapidevskiy, V. Molokov, N. Kamanin, M. Slepnev, M. Vodopyanov, and I. Doronin were the first in the country to be awarded the lofty title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

Under conditions of the aggravation of the international situation and the increase in fascist Germany's aggressiveness, the Communist Party and the Soviet government adopted effective measures to strengthen the country's defensive capability. Relying on the achievements of science and the steadily growing aviation industry, the Air Force grew quantitatively and changed qualitatively. As a result of the measures which were adopted, by the spring of 1941 the number of airplanes in the Soviet Air Force had increased significantly.

Under the most difficult conditions of the initial period of the Great Patriotic War the Soviet command opposed the mass raids of the Hitlerites with active and offensive air battles of fighter aviation and strikes against enemy troops and airfields. Soviet pilots stood with their breasts for the defense of the motherland and demonstrated miracles of heroism and the greatest responsibility for the fate of the socialist state. The main forces of fascist Germany's air forces were thrashed again in the battles at Moscow and Stalingrad, in the sky of the Kuban, and on the Kursk salient.

Soviet aviation made a tremendous contribution to the defeat of the hated enemy. Of 100,000 airplanes lost by the fascists during World War II, 77,000 were destroyed on the Soviet-German front including 57,000--in the air and on airfields--by the pilots of the Air Force, naval aviation, and the fighter aviation of the National Air Defense Forces.

In the matter of the aggressor's defeat the contribution of civil aviation is also significant. More than 20,000 of its pilots took part in combat operations.

The motherland rated the fliers' exploit highly. More than 200,000 of them were awarded orders and medals, 2,420 became Heroes of the Soviet Union, 65 were awarded this title twice, and the famous aces A. Pokryshkin and I. Kozhedub became triple Heroes of the Soviet Union.

In the postwar years, thanks to the tireless concern of the party and the government for the strengthening of the country's defensive capability, the Air Force rose to a new qualitative stage. It was transformed into a formidable service of the Armed Forces capable of exerting decisive influence on the course of contemporary operations of various scales. Aviation personifies the fatherland's might and the high level of Soviet science and technology.

Today the peaceful sky of the motherland is vigilantly guarded by the sons and grandsons of the frontline fighters. They are men who are ideologically tempered, boundlessly devoted to the cause of communism, bold, valiant, and possessing high flying skill.

The military fliers of the Red Banner Transcaucasus Military District are greeting their holiday--Soviet Air Fleet Day--in an environment of lofty patriotic enthusiasm caused by the preparations initiated for the 27th Congress of our party. The personnel of the air units and subunits are striving to mark this important event in the life of the country in a worthy manner. The scope of socialist competition for a further rise in the quality of combat training, the more effective accomplishment of tasks in combat and political training, and the vigilant performance of combat alert duty are expanding.

Having gone on pre-Congress watch, the military aviators are demonstrating their ideological and political maturity and clear understanding of the missions facing them. An example of this can be provided by the aviation collective where Lieutenant Colonel N. Filippov is the commander. Here difficult training-combat missions are accomplished successfully, the organizational and methodological work is at the proper level, and the morale of the personnel is high.

Many other collectives are also marching in the vanguard of the competitors. The exercise "Kavkaz-85" which was recently conducted showed that the fliers are comprehensively trained for the conduct of combat operations under difficult conditions.

Our aviation is equipped with first-class equipment which permits operating effectively under any conditions, including in mountain terrain which is typical of our district's territory. However, success in battle, just as everywhere, is decided by people. Experience shows that a strong, technically well equipped enemy can be defeated by ideologically tempered, steadfast fighting men who possess strong moral-psychological qualities and master irreproachably the equipment and tactics for the conduct of contemporary battle.

An important role in the indoctrination of these qualities is allotted to commanders, political officers, and engineer personnel. Officer leaders delve daily and deeply into everything new and undeviatingly implement the requirements which regulate flying work, and they organize combat training purposefully and competently.

Special attention is merited by the propagation of experience in accident-free flight work. For flight safety is a matter of state importance. It is unthinkable without the high personal responsibility of commanders at all echelons and of all members of flight crews for the quality of preparations for each flight.

In implementing the requirements of the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet Minister of Defense, the military aviators are working persistently on a further rise in combat readiness and the improvement of air and tactical training. On the exercise "Kavkaz-85" command personnel, staff officers, political officers, and the majority of personnel demonstrated increased combat maturity and lofty moral-political and psychological qualities. This permits declaring with confidence that the Transcaucasus fliers, in a common combat formation with all the men of the district, are always ready to step forth for the defense of their motherland and accomplish their patriotic and international duty in a worthy manner.

Lieutenant General of Aviation I. A. Zhabin

Riga SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA in Russian 18 Aug 85 p 2

[Interview with Lt Gen Avn I. A. Zhabin, Chief of Air Force Political Department of Red Banner Baltic Military District, "Stars on the Wing," date and place not given, on the occasion of Soviet Air Fleet Day]

[Text] On the eve of the holiday the member of the Military Council and Chief of the Air Force Political Department of the Red Banner Military District, Lieutenant General I. A. Zhabin, answered questions of the SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA correspondent.

[Question] In the year of the 40th anniversary of the defeat of fascist Germany and militaristic Japan our conversation, obviously, should begin with the contribution which the military aviators made to the attainment of the great victory.

[Answer] Of course. But with a necessary digression to prewar history, to the years of the birth, development, and maturity of our aviation. Today we remember with gratitude that from the first days of the young Soviet republic's existence the party devoted constant attention to the creation of the aviation industry and equipment and to the upbringing and education of designers, engineers, and pilots. The traditions born in the fire of the Civil War and in the course of the record-breaking flight of Soviet aces which amazed the entire world were manifested most brilliantly during the Great Patriotic War. The winged fighting men in their red-starred machines smashed the enemy at any time of the day and on all fronts; aviation took a most direct part in all strategically important battles of the Great Patriotic War. Suffice it to say more than three million combat sorties were accomplished during its course.

[Question] Convincing facts. However, for our foes in the West, it turns out, they are no reason. Now they often say and write that it was not the Soviet Armed Forces but the Allied troops which made the decisive contribution to the defeat of fascist Germany and militaristic Japan.

[Answer] Attempts to distort history were also undertaken in the past. Pseudo-historians have recourse to them especially often in the year of the glorious jubilee of the great victory, playing various false trump cards. For example, they are trying to exaggerate the significance of the air strikes by American and British aviation, thereby leaving the role of the Soviet Air Force in the shade. But facts, as is known, are stubborn things. In order to put everything in perspective it is worth remembering that out of 110,000 airplanes lost by the enemy 77,000 were destroyed on the Soviet-German front. Another comparison: at the end of the war the Air Force of the Soviet Army had four times as many airplanes at the front than enemy aviation. These and the figures presented above provide the opportunity for any unprejudiced person to have a true impression of our aviation's power and of its true role in the last war.

The Soviet people will not forget the heroism and selflessness of their winged fighters. At the concluding stage of the war they smashed the enemy in the Baltic sky. And we are proud that the names of the valiant hawks are inscribed forever in the history of our Red Banner district which recently marked its 45th anniversary. Seventy of them were awarded the lofty title of Hero of the Soviet Union and six air units received the honorable designation of "Riga."

The exploits of the wartime heroes are not only a glorious past. They serve the young generation, which has received the combat baton, as an example of boundless service to the socialist fatherland, courage, and loyalty to military duty. The traditions of the front were and remain for us a powerful means for the indoctrination of people and raising the combat and political training of the personnel of the district's Air Force.

[Question] The continuity of combat and spiritual experience is obvious. Today new facets are also being manifested clearly, of course, in the soldierly labor of the military aviators....

[Answer] We have been living beneath a peaceful sky for 40 years, but in recent years that international situation has been sharply strained. It is primarily the ruling circles of the United States of America which bear responsibility

for the situation which has developed, as was stressed at the April (1985) plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. They continue to step forth as the leaders of the arms race and are trying to extend it to outer space, too, openly sabotaging all of our country's peaceful initiatives. The foreign policy of the aggressive imperialist circles led to a noticeable increase in tension with all the dangerous consequences which ensue therefrom. Under these conditions the Communist Party and the Soviet government are devoting unremitting attention to the strengthening of our motherland's defensive capability and the improvement of the Armed Forces and their component part--the Air Force.

Thanks to the increased capabilities of the economy, the achievements of scientists and designers, and the labor of workers and engineers our aviation has taken a significant step in its development on the basis of the broad use of the scientific and technical revolution's achievements. The basis of the Air Force now consists of missile-carrying airplanes. They are equipped with the most modern weapons, means for detection and fire control, and the latest navigation equipment. The crews of our combat aircraft can operate successfully under difficult weather conditions, day and night, at lowest and highest altitudes, and can cover tremendous distances. In recent years new multipurpose airplanes have been created with variable wing geometry and powerful vertical takeoff and landing aircraft have been built.

However, by itself first-class equipment may prove useless if it is not controlled by competent, determined people who are boundlessly devoted to the motherland and the Communist Party. In implementing the technical reequipping of aviation, our party and the Soviet government never weakened attention to questions in the training of flight, technical engineering, command, and political personnel. This is why commanders, political organs, and party and Komsomol organizations are directing their efforts toward the upbringing of ideologically tempered, steadfast, and skilled aerial fighters who are capable of gaining the victory over a strong and cunning enemy.

Special attention has been concentrated on the training of the flight personnel--people of exceptionally difficult and strained soldierly labor whose profession constantly requires self-control and great courage.

[Question] This means that contemporary aerial battle is first of all a battle of minds, characters, and capabilities. It is not equipment, even if equipped with the "smartest" instruments, which accomplishes specific missions, but man assisted by machine....

[Answer] No equipment frees man from the requirement to think. I believe that this rule is extended, first of all, to those to whom the most difficult aviation complexes have been entrusted. For it is a man, not a robot, who sits in the aircraft cockpit. And he is required to make an accurate estimate of the situation, "digest" a mass of details of contemporary dynamic aerial battle, and adopt the only correct decision.

The experience of the best convinces us that the pilot whose flying, technical, and tactical skill is multiplied by lofty moral and political qualities can count on victory. And we are striving to achieve this alloying.

[Question] The soldierly work of the fliers sums up the results of intense training and socialist competition. We know that it is a difficult and important examination for all personnel. How are the district's flyers withstanding it?

[Answer] The military aviators are accomplishing their assigned missions with great responsibility. They are on combat alert to protect the aerial borders of the Soviet Baltic round the clock, under any weather conditions. Pilots, navigators, engineers and technicians, and communications and rear services specialists are improving their professional training in the course of intense combat training.

An effective means for improving the effectiveness and quality of combat training is socialist competition which is taking place this year under the slogan, "Our selfless soldierly labor for the 40th anniversary of the great victory and the 27th CPSU Congress!" The following figures tell of its intensity eloquently: One out of every three fliers is greeting Air Fleet Day in the ranks of the experts of combat and political training, and 80 percent of the officers, warrant officers [praporshchik], soldiers, and sergeants are rated specialists.

Officers V. Kazakov, K. Chesnichenko, and V. Lashko are accomplishing their military duty irreproachably. Without sparing strength and time experienced methodologists officers D. Lomako, A. Kornev, and N. Fedorenko are teaching the aerial fighters the fine points of flying work. First-class pilots E. Delpers, A. Shumov, N. Orlov, and others are tirelessly improving their aerial training and destroying the target with the first pass and the first attack.

The technical engineering personnel are contributing much energy and creative search to the preparation of the aviation equipment for flights. Among them I will name highly qualified specialists officers A. Matsko, S. Kuznetsov, V. Alksnis, Ya. Kupniyeks, and A. Shcherbakov.

Of course, what has been attained is not the limit. New, high objectives lie ahead. And all the multifaceted party-political work which is called upon to concentrate the efforts of the personnel on ensuring the main components of high combat readiness is directed toward their attainment.

The Soviet people and workers of the republic can be confident that the fliers of the Red Banner Baltic Military District, in a common formation, are standing guard over the aerial borders of the Soviet Baltic and are always ready to accomplish their assigned mission to defend socialism's great accomplishments.

6367
CSO: 1801/308

AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

MID-AIR INCIDENT BETWEEN LEADER AND WINGMAN DURING GROUND ATTACK

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Aug 85 p 2

[Article by KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent Col G. Ivanov under the rubric "For Flight Safety": "When the Situation Changed"]

[Text] The attack against the ground target didn't succeed with the first pass. While on the bombing run wingman Lt V. Degtyarev reported to the leader, flight commander Capt V. Metelkin:

"I've fallen behind."

"We won't work," Metelkin decided.

The wingman was able to form up on his leader after they passed the target. The leader vigorously put his aircraft in a climb, and then again attacked the target from a dive, this time from another direction. Degtyarev again fell behind at the beginning of the maneuver, but this time he "cut" the flight path a bit and considerably closed the distance with his leader, although it still remained greater than prescribed. The lieutenant knew that his leader would reduce engine rpm in the dive. "If I keep engine rpm the same for a certain time," reasoned the lieutenant, "I'll be able to catch up with my leader." He proceeded as outlined. The distance between the aircraft dropped quickly and then it became clear that the wingman's speed was greater than required. To keep from moving ahead of his leader, the lieutenant reduced engine rpm and lowered his brake flaps, but this didn't help.

After overtaking Metelkin the lieutenant suddenly remembered that it was time to aim. The crosshairs were on the target. Degtyarev pressed the bomb release plate and immediately began to bring the aircraft out of the dive into a level attitude. At this moment his entire body felt a heavy blow. "Did the bomb really separate so unusually?" thought Degtyarev. Casting an alarmed glance to the left, he caught sight of his leader's aircraft above him and noticed a dent on the wingtip of his own combat aircraft.

The leader and wingman landed the damaged planes at their airfield some time later.

What happened in the air was categorized as a precondition for a flying accident. Experienced inspectors who thoroughly and comprehensively analyzed the officers' preparation for the flight and their actions in the air determined its reasons. In their opinion, Capt Metelkin had poor mastery of the methodology of flying as a leader and Lt Degtyarev had a poor knowledge of safety rules when flying as part of a pair.

This is true, but if we analyze this fact from the standpoint of the aviators' attitude toward the assigned job, one obviously can say that this attitude is irresponsible. Let's follow the pair's actions at the range from this point of view.

Now then, Degtyarev failed to drop the bomb on the first pass. In this situation the pilots' further actions are clearly spelled out by recommendations of the training methods council, approved by the district aviation commander.

They prescribe that if a pair has not maintained the prescribed interval and distance on the first target run, another pass should be made singly or they should proceed to the airfield at increased interval and distance.

Capt Metelkin did not comply with this requirement, which was well known to him. He took the pair into another attack, which moreover involved bombing out of a complicated maneuver. Here the leader committed one more breach of flying rules. The flight plan provided for bombing on the first run, firing the cannon on the next run from the very same direction, and an attack without firing or a practice bomb release in the third pass, this time from another direction and with an advanced kind of maneuver. For some reason the flight commander combined the planned elements of the first and third passes, which was a surprise to his wingman.

Later it was Lt Degtyarev who violated requirements of guidance documents two times in a row. For example, on seeing that his aircraft was closing with the aircraft ahead to less than the prescribed distance, he was supposed to turn away from the bombing run, but the lieutenant chose the worst variant--he took up a position below his leader and left his field of view. Then after overtaking his leader and losing him from view, Degtyarev did not take his aircraft out of the dive, he didn't turn away to the outside, which he could easily see, and didn't abort the mission as he was obligated to do.

The fact is that he is no novice in the air. He has been trained to the second class level and made 32 flights as a wingman. He studied safety measures, including a wingman's actions in case of overtaking the leader, during preparation for each of them. Not long before, he successfully performed a mission in a tactical flying exercise and his capable actions as part of a pair had been recognized by the range flight controller. Then he blundered in the next flight as part of a pair. How can we not mention the poor influence of the flight commander's example here?

By the way, it seemed that the flight commander was competing with his subordinate in violating safety measures. After losing sight of his wingman, he also

was obligated to abort the mission and turn away from the bombing run to the side which he could easily see. But instead of this, Capt Metelkin banked his aircraft and began looking for his wingman's aircraft. Unfortunately, the range flight controller, who is given the authority to prohibit the crews' work in case they violate safety measures, also limited himself to the role of outside observer in this instance.

A pilot's habit of strictly following the laws of flying and having an especially responsible attitude toward the job is known to be shaped in the course of day-to-day combat training. An atmosphere of high mutual exactingness for good-quality, conscientious work on the ground and in the air contributes to development of that habit. But it was this atmosphere that was lacking in this subunit. Preparation for flights was not always conducted with proper quality. The pilots often worked on the simulator "for a check-mark," without advanced scenarios. The most complicated and difficult elements in controlling an aircraft were not polished. The experience of foremost subunits where ground training is conducted with high effectiveness by the "dismounted flight training" method was not used here.

Even earlier, before the incident being analyzed, the poor quality of flight preparation resulted in mistakes in the air. For example, Maj Yu. Korneyev proceeded along the flight path at an altitude greater than prescribed, Capt V. Kharchenko executed a left turn in the air instead of a right turn, Capt L. Kelle brought back a bomb from the range as he had not executed the required switchings, and Lt T. Kayshikulov made a landing approach with a considerable excess of speed. Lt Degtyarev also made errors earlier. This possibly might not have happened had flight commander Capt Metelkin worked on the lieutenant's training and his flight preparation seriously and responsibly.

Metelkin himself was recognized at one time as one of the best pilots in district aviation, and he had been appointed flight commander with consideration of this. He personally usually prepared for flights thoroughly and as a rule executed the missions excellently, but he had not yet proven himself as a flight commander. His colleagues began to notice elements of conceit in Capt Metelkin's behavior.

It is common knowledge that exaggerating one's successes doesn't lead to any good, but those in the subunit didn't correct the officer in time. Capt I. Vildanov, squadron party organization secretary, also closed his eyes to these features in Metelkin's conduct. He should have had a chat with his comrade about the latter's attitude toward command duties and about modesty. The pilot possibly would have drawn proper conclusions.

Sufficient time passed after the unsuccessful flight to make necessary adjustments in the work of preventing flying incidents.

"We drew up and carried out a plan of actions of a methodological nature," said deputy regimental commander Lt Col I. Belozor during a conversation. "For example, the pilots who were authorized made a flight in a two-seat trainer to restore the skills of flying as a pair."

All this is well and good, but the question arises: Just what has been done in the collective to develop the officers' sense of responsibility for strict fulfillment of laws of flying which Metelkin and Degtyarev lacked? Certain adjustments also were made to indoctrinal and party-political work. During flight operations I had occasion to observe the attention with which pilots and commanders now were analyzing the data of on-board objective monitoring equipment before a repeat sortie. This was gratifying, but far from everything that is necessary has yet been done.

The party committee took a unique position. On the one hand, it seemingly displayed principle in announcing strict party punishments for several party members who were in charge. On the other hand, however, it gave to understand that the violation of laws of flying by officers Metelkin and Degtyarev was a chance occurrence. Maj V. Tikhonov, who at that time was performing duties as squadron commander, was made answerable for party liability, but the squadron commander himself was not subjected to party influence. One other point is noteworthy. Even today party organization secretary Capt Vildanov is propagandized in the subunit as exemplary and the party organization he heads, as foremost. The call to take the example in competition from the flight commanded by Capt V. Metelkin sounds quite strange. No comment necessary, as the saying goes.

6904
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AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

FIGHTER-BOMBER CABIN DEPRESSURIZES DURING STEEP DIVE

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Aug 85 p 1

[Article by Maj V. Semenikhin, Order of Lenin Transbaikal Military District:
"Precisely and Coolly"]

[Text] Gds Lt M. Reshetnikov displayed high professional expertise, courage and self-control in a difficult situation in the air.

He was performing live firing on the range. When the fighter-bomber pilot began a steep dive the cockpit depressurized (it was later learned that this was due to the oversight of the technical personnel). The air stream tore off the canopy. Reshetnikov felt a heavy blow against his chest. Only a short distance remained to the ground...

Reshetnikov pulled back on the stick. The multiple G-forces pressed the pilot to the back of the seat. His protective helmet and oxygen mask were ripped from him by a hard blast of air and Reshetnikov was left without communications with the ground. In this spot the officer functioned precisely and coolly.

After gaining the necessary altitude he leveled off the combat aircraft and reduced speed. The officer constantly maintained a heading to the airfield and landed safely.

Gds Lt Mikhail Reshetnikov was given thanks and presented with a valuable gift by order of the senior commander for the proficiency and courage displayed in the air.

6904
CSO: 1801/2

NAVAL FORCES

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA CONSIDERS NAVY'S IMAGE ABROAD

PM250952 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 20 Oct 85 First Edition p 1

[Editorial: "Beneath the Flag of the Soviet Motherland"]

[Text] In the spring a detachment of Red Banner Black Sea Fleet ships cruised up the Danube in honor of the 40th anniversary of the great victory. It sailed around 4,000 km along the river, paying friendly visits to six countries--Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Romania. And the picture was more or less the same whatever port our ships arrived at: hundreds of people waiting to welcome them on the shore, a sea of flowers and smiles. In each country the Soviet seamen were greeted as welcome guests, in each country they had a multitude of warm meetings with local people, and in each country they worthily represented their motherland and their people. This is evidenced by more than 30,000 entries made in various languages in visitors' books by people who came on board the Soviet ships on "open deck" days. Here are a few lines from them: "Long live the Soviet land! Long live the mighty Soviet Navy!" "Discipline, composure, order--this is what we have seen on your ships"; "You are the worthy heirs of the people who saved Europe from fascism!"...

Our seamen received the same sincere and good testimonials during visits to Cuba and Finland, Algeria and Tunisia, India and Vietnam, the Cape Verde Islands and Nigeria.... Ships of the Soviet Navy, which can now be found sailing all over the world ocean, pay friendship visits to dozens of countries every year. And wherever they go the seamen are vigorous propagandists of the world's first socialist state and display internationalism, friendliness, a high degree of culture, and respect for peoples' customs and traditions.

Our Navy, provided with the last word in equipment, is strong and mighty. But it does not threaten anyone. Like all the USSR Armed Forces, it exclusively serves the purpose of the defense of the motherland and protection of its state interests. The whole world is familiar with the numerous instances of Soviet seamen's nobility and humanity, their deep respect for the dignity of other peoples, and willingness to come to the aid of those who need it.

The crews of Soviet ships participated in eliminating the consequences of a tropical cyclone on the island of Mauritius and gave selfless assistance to the people of Sri Lanka when the fury of the elements brought disaster. They risked their lives to help Egypt sweep the mines laid in the Suez Canal, and they also cleared the port of Chittagong in Bangladesh of mines and sunken ships.

And here is a relatively recent instance--during an official friendly visit to Poland by a detachment of Soviet ships Chief Petty Officer A. Linskiy, from the missile cruiser "Groznyy," saved a Polish boy from drowning.

Examples of this kind are striking evidence of the noble image of the Soviet seaman, a person raised in the spirit of communist conviction and morality, in the spirit of the Soviet way of life. By all their actions and behavior Soviet naval seamen refute the accumulation of false bourgeois propaganda about our country and bring to all peoples the truth about the Soviet Union and Soviet people's struggle for peace and security, the truth about the Leninist party's policy, which accords with the fundamental interests of the working masses.

Commanders, political workers, and party and Komsomol organizations on ships do a great deal to ensure that every seaman is worthy of the lofty mission of the Soviet Navy. They instill in every serviceman the desire to enhance our country's prestige abroad through concrete action and to be deeply aware of his personal responsibility for the honor of the Soviet Naval ensign, which is covered in the glory of many victories in the flames of the socialist revolution and Civil and Great Patriotic Wars.

On ocean voyages the ships are sometimes many thousands of miles away from their native shores. It is very important for the seamen not to feel separated from home, to feel a constant, unbreakable spiritual link with the homeland, and to share the people's thoughts and preoccupations. This is particularly important when preparations for the 27th CPSU Congress are entering, as was noted at the recent CPSU Central Committee Plenum, a highly crucial stage--the stage where the party consults the people directly on a grand scale on most important economic and political questions and when all Soviet people are working enthusiastically to fulfill the plans of the last year of the 11th 5-Year Plan. In every crew on a long cruise it is necessary to organize the proper provision of political information and active propaganda of the Soviet land's successes in communist building. An all-round effort must be made to instill in seamen a sense of Soviet national and military pride, selfless love of the motherland, and a deep awareness of the fact that when they are in foreign countries they are essentially ambassadors of the Soviet land.

Certain people in the West get irritated by our blue and white naval ensign fluttering confidently in the world ocean. The forces of imperialism and reaction are tormented by nostalgia for the days when the navies of the imperialist states felt they owned the expanses of the ocean. Hence their efforts to intimidate our seamen with dangerous maneuvers, simulated attacks, various provocations, and ideological subversion. Anyone who sets out on a long voyage must be ready to counter our class opponents' provocative actions with political vigilance, courage, steadfastness, restraint, and professional expertise.

Ship commanders have an important role here. Tactician, navigator, and educator of the personnel, the ship commander has to be a diplomat as well. He needs sound international legal training, the knowledge and practical ability to comply with international navigation rules and conventions, and knowledge of international protocol and the ceremonial aspect of official visits. And

above all he must be clearly aware that the ship entrusted to him is part of our state's territory, that everywhere and in all things he must act in accordance with the navy manual, "observing the interests and dignity of the USSR."

Attempting somehow to play down the significance of our Navy's international mission and the invariable success of visits to foreign ports by Soviet ships, the enemies of socialism are spread absurd fabrications to the effect that only people who have been "specially vetted" participate in the visits. Such fantasies can only give rise to irony. Everyone knows that the ships on cruises abroad are manned by perfectly ordinary seamen, like those in any other naval crew. But the main "secrets" of the authority and respect they command are to be found elsewhere--in our communist ideology and morality. They are instilled by our Leninist party, our Soviet way of life, our schools, and the Komsomol and they go through a tempering process in labor collectives. But when they are in the services, which are rightly called a school of courage and expertise, young people's best qualities are further developed.

Party political work is an important factor in the mobilization of seamen for the worthy fulfillment of their patriotic and international duty. The correct procedure is to make every effort to step it up during preparations for trips abroad and during the trips themselves, to give careful consideration to the placement of the party and Komsomol aktiv to ensure an effective party influence on all categories of personnel, and to keep personnel up to date with the political situation in the area in which they are sailing.

Many crews in our Navy have represented our country abroad on several occasions and have plenty of experience of high-quality training for voyages abroad and for calling at foreign ports. Take, for example, the crew of the cruiser "Zhdanov," which has paid two visits in recent years--to Greece and Libya. Both visits were successful and particularly valuable for the fact that the hosts mentioned our seamen's fine knowledge of the customs, traditions, and ways and even of the particular national psychological traits of the population of the countries. Although there is nothing surprising in this. After all, the Soviet people serving on the cruiser have been educated in the spirit of respect for other peoples. Another important fact is that a great deal of complex work was done before the visit studying the features of the countries to be visited, work which involved every seaman.

In the eyes of the whole world the Soviet Navy is a symbol of good will and international ties. Like all USSR Armed Forces servicemen, Soviet seamen will continue to worthily perform their honorable and responsible mission and selflessly serve their motherland and the cause of the Communist Party.

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CSO: 1801/39

DOSAAF

MEETING OF AZERBAIJANI MASS DEFENSE WORK COMMITTEE

Baku BAKINSKIY ROBOCHIY in Russian 24 Sep 85 p 2

[Article from AZERINFORM: "Indoctrinating Worthy Defenders of Motherland"]

[Text] The purposeful indoctrination of young people in the spirit of utter devotion to the communist party as worthy defenders of socialism and world peace is the very important task to which the regular meeting of the republican coordination council for mass defense work and military-patriotic training of the Azerbaijan CP Central Committee was devoted.

Major General A. A. Kasimov, AzSSR military commissar, presented information on the results of the spring call-up of young people into the ranks of the armed forces and the tasks for successfully conducting this year's autumn call-up. The republic has established and is operating an effective system of military-patriotic and international training of young people, and is preparing them for service in the armed forces of the USSR. Attention is warranted by the practices of conducting a ceremonial ritual for sending the conscripts off, and for the simultaneous reception of the soldiers who have served in the ranks of the Soviet Army. But, as noted, there are still many problems in the work. There is a great deal to do to improve the initial military preparedness of the young people, to raise the level of Russian language instruction, and especially in the rural area. Medical-sanitation work for the young people is being conducted poorly, and in some urban and rural regions medical examinations are being conducted perfunctorily. The work on the teenagers rooms should be stepped up.

In a number of rayons there is a perfunctory approach to the GTO ["ready for work and defense"] standards examinations. A significant part of the conscripted young people can not confirm the title of badge holder in the GTO system.

The need for better support of the conscripts at the assembly points and during movement, and for conducting explanatory work among the transport personnel was emphasized at the meeting.

Information about the results of the selection and ordering of the republic's young people into the country's military training establishments was heard. It is noted that the experience worthy of attention in the the work of

selection the republic's best representatives of its young people for training has been built up in the NKAO [Nagorno-karabakhskaya Autonomous Oblast], Ali-Bayramly, Zhganovskiy, Fizulinskiy, Kedabekskiy and other regions of the republic. In addition, it was noted in the speeches that the facts of the perfunctory approach to this important matter on the part of the rayons'military commissariats should be eliminated.

F. K. Khaspolatov, First Secretary of the party's raykom, presented data on the conditions of work on the review of the matter in Baku's Oktyabrskiy Rayon. The rayon's party organization conducted certain work for preparing the young people for military service, and educating the youth in the spirit of soviet patriotism and devotion to the Socialist Motherland. Furthermore, insufficient attention is being devoted to the selection of youth for the higher military training, defense-sport work, and especially among participants of the schools providing general education, professional-technical institutions and on the place of residence of the population.

Ramiz Enver Mekhtiyev, secretary of the AzSSR CP Central Committee, summed up the results of the council meeting.

Fikrat Gamidovich Akhmedov, deputy chairman of the AzSSR Council of Ministers; and Sabir Mamedkuli Guseynov, chief of the Administrative Organs Department of the AzSSR CP Central Committee participated in the meeting.

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CSO: 1801/11

FOREIGN MILITARY AFFAIRS

RSFSR PAPER TERMS NATO BALTOPS-85 EXERCISE 'PROVOCATIVE'

PM100933 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 9 Oct 85 First Edition p 5

[A. Mozgovoy "Today's Commentary": "Atlanticists Muddy the Water"]

[Text] The Baltic has at present been turned into an arena for large-scale NATO naval exercises, "Baltops-85." More than 30 ships from the FRG, Denmark, and the United States are involved.

The battleship "Iowa," armed with 9 long-range 16-inch guns and 32 Tomahawk nuclear cruise missiles, is the flagship of the American squadron. According to a CBS television report, the "Iowa," together with the other ships in the NATO armada, will, during the maneuvers, be carrying out firing "a few miles off socialist countries' territory."

Such actions cannot be seen as anything other than deliberate provocation against the Baltic countries belonging to the Warsaw Pact. Indeed, the provocation began even before the maneuvers started. The presence in the Baltic of the American dreadnought stuffed with nuclear missiles generated a state of war hysteria in West German militarists. Clearly losing any sense of responsibility, the command of the Bundesmarine, as the FRG Navy is called, sent into GDR airspace two combat helicopters which overflew a GDR coastguard patrol ship in the region of Ruegen Island.

Such sorties are fully in keeping with NATO naval strategy, which is completely subordinated to America's global expansionist plans. American Vice Admiral (Mastin), commander of the NATO task force in the Atlantic, describes the strategy as follows: "The task dictated by bloc naval strategy consists in advancing forces to forward-based positions and, if need be, carrying out combat operations on the enemy's territory, that is, on the territory of Warsaw Pact countries." That is why the "Iowa" is getting ready to carry out firing on the edge of socialist countries' territorial waters. That is why the Bundesmarine command, in gross violation of the norms of international law, is sending helicopters into GDR airspace.

Another alarming fact is also noteworthy. At the same time as NATO is organizing unprecedented militarist games in the Baltic, joint naval maneuvers involving the U.S. and Japanese Navies are being held in another part of the world, the Pacific. They too are unprecedented in their scale. They involve more than 120 ships and auxiliary craft. It is no accident that the exercises

in the Baltic and the Pacific coincide. They are both components of the integrated plan to seize the USSR in a "Pincer movement" from the sea which obsesses U.S. Navy Secretary J. Lehman. American and NATO headquarters, however, are issuing assurances that the exercises off the socialist countries' shores are nothing more than just a bit of childish fun and threaten no one's interests. Vice Admiral (Mastin) has even expressed the wish that the USSR should not consider such maneuvers as provocation. I wonder what the admiral would say if the Soviet Navy began holding exercises in Chesapeake Bay.

Today, on the eve of the Soviet-American summit, every step taken by either side must be particularly considered and well thought out. That applies to naval maneuvers too. As CBS correspondent (D. Tannel) observed, while the Soviets "are stressing the theme of peace," the "Iowa" "is demonstrating American resolve." Resolve to do what? To continue confrontation? At any rate, there is no resolve to seek ways of reducing the dangerous level of international tension.

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CSQ: 1801/39

AFGHANISTAN

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ON SOVIET SAPPERS IN DRA

PM240925 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Oct 85 Second Edition p 3

[Report by special correspondent Colonel V. Filatov under the rubric "Place of Exploit--Afghanistan": "Sappers"--first three paragraphs are KRASNAYA ZVEZDA introduction]

[Text] The personnel of the limited contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan is performing a lofty international exploit. Arriving in this country at its government's request, the Soviet serviceman, rendering the Afghan people selfless aid and support in repelling armed aggression, has won their profound respect and recognition.

The International Exploit is continuing...

The sketch published in KRASNAYA ZVEZDA today opens a new rubric, "Place of Exploit--Afghanistan."

It is only a stone's throw from the place where this sapper subunit is based to the mountains. But the sappers are not stationed in the mountains. It is a plain. But what kind of a plain? Rocks varying in size from a sheep to a camel. They lay like melons in the bazaar--one on top of the other.

What else was there here when our soldiers arrived? There was a stream. Strong and clear, it ran from somewhere in the mountains. It leaped like mercury between the rocks and continued its downhill run. This stream no longer exists, but we will make a special mention of that a little later.

In Afghanistan they say: "Water is more precious than gold in our country." Despite the fact that the stream ran between the rocks not a single man or animal went onto these rocks--for fear of breaking his legs or his neck. Nature had created this "minefield." By agreement with the province leadership, with its permission, the Soviet soldiers settled here.

Commander Lieutenant Colonel Nikolay Georgiyevich Antonenko is stocky and his face resembles that of Vasiliy Ivanovich Chapayev. Lt Col Antonenko has not been in Afghanistan very long. It may be said that he came to a ready-made post prepared by his two predecessors. He did not begin, as they did, when there was not even anywhere to pitch a soldier's tent--two or three piles of

rocks had to be removed to do it. Usually they were blasted with dynamite, sometimes with the aid of an excavator, and occasionally the soldier's shoulders and arms were used to load them onto a dump truck and they were taken further away.

People came from the hamlets to see what the ("shuravi") were doing and why there were sometimes explosions. Surprise showed on the Afghan's faces. Once there was a conversation which is remembered to this day. A robust and handsome old man endowed with a white beard said:

"Even 200 words are not worth half a job done, but if you can untie a knot with your hands, why trouble your teeth?"

This was the rhetorical speech which the old man addressed to a senior lieutenant with a wiry red moustache.

"What are you talking about, father?" the senior lieutenant asked.

"Son, you can't throw a bridge across the sea. How many times we have come to this land to rid it of those devilish rocks, but they are stronger than us. We have consulted and decided we will bow to what is Allah's will and your soldiers with your commanders can settle on the soft ground. To offend your friends is to oblige your enemies. Stop this futile work with the rocks."

"Speech is a mirror of the speaker," the senior lieutenant replied. "Thank you, father, for your kindly feelings for us. But may wheat and corn continue to grow on that land. And we will master this," he nodded toward the rocks.

2 [all numbers as published]

In the units and subunits of the limited contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan I saw various objects used as monuments in the middle of the parade ground; in one subunit a KRAZ truck stood on a pedestal; in another an armored transport vehicle; while the sappers had given pride of place to a rock--as huge as a mammoth with its legs disappearing into the ground. It had not been removed or blasted. It had been left as a symbol, as a little piece of the dead land which used to extend here.

The commander and I were walking past this unique monument when our conversation was interrupted by a canonade--a fierce and savage battle had broken out somewhere nearby. The commander did not display the slightest interest in the thunder of machineguns and submachine guns. I was surprised, because while I was in Afghanistan I had seen commanders reacting to this kind of thing. Some kind of internal fighting spring instantly comes into operation within them, transporting them into the world of gunfire, the world of the danger to which their subordinates are subjected at that moment. I noticed in Afghanistan that the thoughts and concerns of the smallest commander and the biggest for the soldier continue literally round the clock: What he has to eat and drink, how many rounds and grenades he has, whether he has put on his bullet-proof vest and helmut, changed his underwear this week, and visited the bath house, but the main concern is that he should stay alive and well... It is a

case here of the strictest military discipline, of irreproachable military order, of the soldier's impeccable degree of training. I know the commander from Afghanistan: After a battle in which two soldiers were wounded he wrote a report and investigated in the strictest way all the blunders he said he had committed. An authoritative commission studied the content of the report. It discovered no omissions or blunders in the battle on the commander's part. It assessed the commander's actions during the battle as mature and skilled. The very fact he had made a report was evidence of the commander's supreme degree of responsibility for his orders, for each of his actions, and evidence of his supreme degree of responsibility for his soldiers' fate.

"What kind of gunfire is it?" I asked the commander. "We'll wait and see," he reassured me.

I understood: At that moment he was more concerned for the saplings growing at the edge of the parade ground.

"We've lost count of the number of trees and bushes we have planted," Antonenko explained. "Some 892 of them have survived..."

Incidentally, about plantings, crops, and the earth. As is well known, Afghanistan is a land of mountains and deserts. There are about 8 million hectares of cultivated land here, and if you consider that 87 percent of the population of nearly 16-17 million is employed in arable farming, you can imagine what land which can produce at least something means to the Afghan.

3

It was in east Afghanistan, in Paktia Province, near the hamlet of (Alikheyl). Our convoy, which included tanks and armored transport vehicles, guns, and vehicles carrying ammunition, was coming to give fire support to the combat operations of an Afghan Army infantry regiment. The sappers reported that a huge area of the road ahead was heavily mined. They also reported that they could not clear it quickly with their available means and, as always in these cases, time was at a premium. On the right a sheer cliff rose to the very sky, blocking our way. On the left was a drop of 1 meter--the fields of the hamlet peasants lay there. Each field was only the size of a volleyball pitch, but what corn stood there, and the wheat was like a wall! If you threw a forage cap in the air, it would remain lying on top of it.

Precious minutes sped by. The sappers were working ahead of the convoy. But time was passing... We saw people approaching us from one of the houses among the patchwork of fields. There were about 20-25 people. They came up. A talk started. One of them said that yes, last night, strangers had mined a whole sector of the road which passes by the outskirts of their village. The peasants had no weapons to drive out the strangers. But the hamlet inhabitants had a plan for getting through the mined sector.

"Our fields are not mined, we are quite certain of that," an old man said.
"Turn off the road and go past the dushman's mines through the fields."

"But we have various armored vehicles and heavy trucks," the commander began to explain. "We can't go without them."

"Bring them," the old man said.

I could clearly imagine what would become of all those green "volleyball fields" when the vehicles passed over them. An end to the harvest.

"We know there is fighting beyond the pass and if you don't get there in time the dushman will escape to Pakistan, it is no distance to the border... Turn from the road..."

Their clothing was simple. They had sinewy necks, their fingers were strong and hard as steel hooks, their bare feet with their hardened soles had seldom seen shoes. How had they decided just like that, of their own accord, to sacrifice their harvest?

I asked the commander:

"Will you go?"

He smiled and looked at his watch.

"In 10-15 minutes we will have to go."

Some 7 minutes passed and two helicopters appeared above us. They circled several times and came to land in the dry bed of what had once been a stream. Without turning off their engines they let out of their bellies 16 soldiers headed by a lieutenant--sappers from Antonenko's subunit. Things got moving. Soon we were bidding farewell to the peasants from (Alikheyl) hamlet. The convoy advanced along the demined road and was in time to help the Afghan infantry regiment.

4

We spent several days in the region of the infantry regiment's combat operations until the gangs the Afghan regiment was fighting had been completely defeated and their ammunition and material stocks had been blown up. The mountains shook from the artillery volleys. All night long the rocket launchers tore the black sky into narrow ribbons. Simple truths are not born of simple circumstances and simple truths are not the fruit of the simple and obvious. Simple truths have their own complex but always predictable path. Here is the simple truth I took with me from (Alikheyl): There are commanders under whose leadership nothing is frightening in battle or in war in general and nothing is impossible on the battlefield when you are with them. And there are probably commanders under whose leadership you feel different in any war. That applies not to Afghanistan, but in general. In war you seldom meet cowards or brave men in their pure form, so to speak, but there are soldiers who have good or bad commanders. A coward in battle is most often someone who does not know what to do in battle, does not know where his place is. A brave man is a soldier who always knows each maneuver on the field. And where does all this come from? From the commander. It was from this viewpoint that I looked at Lt Col Antonenko.

But, having finished showing me his model parade ground, a model one even by the standards of, for instance, the Baltic Military District, he set about showing me the trees surrounding it, each one of which, as Antonenko put it, "Drinks as much water every day as a whole division of soldiers." Then he went on to show me the vegetable garden. Melons, watermelons, onions and garlic were growing there: "For the soldiers' table all year round..." All this was fine, but after all it is not the main thing for a subunit in Afghanistan. And I could scarcely contain myself when I was led to the subsidiary farm. Behind the stone wall about 50 sows were pacing with their rosy little piglets. It was hard to believe, but an awning had been constructed for them out of old superannuated camouflage nets and in the middle of the pen sparkled a huge pond in which the most favored animals were cosseted. "The pond is artificial," Antonenko explained. But when Ensign Petr Borisovich Kaminskiy, who had joined our tour, began to show me the rabbit pen and the chicken house, I could stand it no longer, and asked the commander:

"I was at (Alikhey), you sent a group of your sappers there to clear mines from the road..."

"That is so," Antonenko nodded.

"And what did you do, just take them from this parade ground, from working in the kitchen garden and the pig farm, put them into a helicopter, and off they went?"

The commander raised his eyes to me and I saw in them the same sparks which flashed mischievously in the eyes of the actor Babochkin when he was playing the role of Chapayev and asked his famous question: "Where is the commander's place in battle?"

Kaminskiy continued his story about the subsidiary farm but I was thinking about something else... Antonenko himself had told me that in this undeclared war the dushman had declared so-called mine warfare on all Afghanistan. It affects everyone here. But Antonenko and his sappers have a special part to play in countering it. I could see that you cannot take a step in Afghanistan without a sapper, just like that time in (Alikhey). But Antonenko continued in the same spirit:

"A stream used to run from those mountains. But then it stopped. And it was the only source of water for the subunit. Where had the stream gone? It was the doing of dushman from a distant hamlet. The stream ran through the hamlet. And they had diverted it somewhere. We had to bring in water from a long way off in cisterns. Meanwhile they drilled a hole for us. It was 160 meters deep. Now people drive and come on foot from all the nearby hamlets for water."

"And what about those hamlets a long way away?"

"So far no one has come. But I believe soon water will appear in the stream. Life is proceeding in that direction..."

We said goodbye to the ensign and the commander said:

"You were asking about the shooting. Let's go take a look at what's happening there," Antonenko smiled a wily smile.

It turned out we did not have far to drive; it was 200-300 meters from the parade ground to the firing range.

"This," Antonenko showed me the training places, "was constructed at the same time the first tents were set up. It is as hard to live here without a firing range as it is to live without water..."

I think you need a special attitude toward the blazing sun in Afghanistan. You have to learn not to notice the sun here. Otherwise you won't finish anything. It seemed that the men who were on the firing range at the time were treating it like that. The soldiers moved perhaps slightly more slowly than on a firing range in the Belorussian Military District. It was hot. The wide brims of their hats were turned down, covering their faces and necks. It was hot. Each man carried on a strap, in a cloth case, a water flask or even two flasks. It was hot. But this is not the hottest place in Afghanistan.

What is a training class here? Each class accommodates to a platoon. From the outside it looks like a dug-out. There is camouflage netting instead of a roof. The desks, one for every two men, are dug into the ground. Study was in progress in the classroom. It was being led by Senior Lieutenant V. Rozhok. The subject was "the structure, laying, and neutralization of anti-personnel mines." There were 6 hours of study time allotted to the subject. On each desk were training aids: mines, mines, mines of all systems. I learned that none of the men in the class had yet undertaken real mine clearing. They were the young reinforcement. From all corners of our country. They were sitting in their bulletproof vests. Helmets were on their heads. By the desks were submachine guns. Theory here is at the desk and the practice is two steps from the dug-out--a training minefield just like those the dushmans lay. "Quiet! Training in progress!"

I went on with the commander to another training place. Here, under Major S. Kuptsov's leadership, the soldiers are learning about artificial obstacles. And in the distance there is unceasing gunfire. It turns out they are rehearsing "operations of the movement support detachment under attack conditions" there. On no other training ground have I seen such exertion, such zeal during training.

At the desk Private Valentin Roman had prepared the material base for the exercises. He is a senior sapper. He has been in Afghanistan for 2 years. What has he managed to do during this time? He has cleared about 700 U.S., British, Egyptian, Chinese, Pakistani, and Italian mines from the country's roads. Not so long ago he was awarded the Order of the Red Star. The company under the command of Captain A. Chuchupalov will train now. This is his third year in Afghanistan. He has cleared and neutralized over 1,000 mines. He has been awarded the Order of the Red Star. Excellent mentors for the young men, there's no denying.

On the training ground each category of specialists has been provided with its own camp. "Just as an outstanding pianist has to touch his fingers to his

instrument every day, so the sapper must touch his fingers to the ground every day and must feel with his fingertips the whole ground," I was told by officer Valentin Mefodyevich Yaremchuk, a sapper in the limited contingent of our troops in Afghanistan who is well known for his skill.

There are 10 German shepherd dogs on the subunit's roll. They too have their own training camp on the training ground, where they study as much as everyone in the mornings, before the heat comes. True, humans do not stop their exercises even in the heat. In general, the demands made on the personnel's professional training and study here are particularly exacting. For instance, every week officers take tests in their special subjects and in the ammunition used by the dushmans. A special commission at the level of the commander and his deputy has been created for the purpose. There are lower-level commissions for testing soldiers and sergeants. That is with regards to planned training. But there is training of a different kind. For instance, a mission arrives--organizing sapper support for the combat operations of an Afghan subunit or a sarandoy (people's militia) subunit. A combat mission!

If anyone thinks that when they receive a mission the sappers dash off and rush ahead at breakneck speed, they are profoundly wrong. Sappers do not work like that in Afghanistan. Of course, there are standard situations for which people here are ready day and night. It is a case of other situations when their sapper support begins with... study. On the commander's desk are reports on the region in which the sappers will have to operate; on the nature of the terrain; on the composition of the soil; and it is on the basis of an analysis of previous events that they determine the kind of charges which may be laid...

"In Afghanistan each such mission differs from the previous one," the commander said. "Each time it has to be read like a new book. At the end of training for a combat mission there has to be a commission and tests. Anyone who gets only three marks out of five in the tests is taken off the mission. We take only those with good and excellent knowledge. He whose knowledge is rated at three out of five in training gives a two out of five performance on a minefield. But so far no one has got three out of five. Everyone is eager... Of course, work with maps, models, intelligence, and so forth gives a very great deal. But the most important is work on the training ground. There we create the situation in which we will have to act in the field and we rehearse everything down to the slightest detail. Here is our latest innovation on the training ground--training points for studying the special mines which the dushmans have been using increasingly frequently lately. We have created a training field for a roadwork [dorozhnoye] subunit..."

Antonenko showed me the latest models of new Italian mines. The most experienced--the "academicians" of sapper work--tackle them. Having "sized them up" thoroughly, they hold classes on these charges with the personnel. Mentorship among officers and soldiers is in general universal here. The experienced are attached to new arrivals. After each combat mission, as is the case with airmen after flights, there is an exchange of experience on specific tasks. This is recorded in documentary form. It will serve others in the future.

On their latest mission to back up the combat operations of an Afghan regiment, Lt Col Antonenko's sappers traveled over 1,000 km of mined roads.

"There were losses, but not of personnel," the commander said. "The men were trained for anything unexpected. For instance, you can lose a vehicle and men, or you can lose three vehicles but not a single man, or you can lose neither personnel nor equipment--it all depends on organization, discipline, the precise execution of an instruction, and the personnel's special training. Here everything is decisive, even where and how you sit on an armored transport vehicle in motion..."

The opinion of the very experienced Valentin Mefodyevich Yaremchuk is interesting in this sense:

"In the organization of matters which is used in the engineering and sapper subunit, the enemy cannot harm it. Even these land mines: The power of the explosion is enormous and tens of kilograms of explosive are put into the charge and it has an intricate detonating device. It is hard to detect with a mine probe or with the aid of a dog because the mine is laid at a considerable depth. But... This depth also consumes a considerable proportion of its explosive force. Nothing happens if you act correctly. And you can always learn to act correctly..."

6. Learn... Study... Learn... Know... I constantly heard these words from the soldiers and sergeants, ensigns and officers. Perhaps that was why I did not see among them men exhausted by the heat and languishing in idleness but increasingly vigorous, purposeful, calm, and active men, somehow special in their confident execution of their duty. All this could hardly have come to them here in Afghanistan, it was laid in them by our entire life but was revealed and manifested in this way here in Afghanistan.

And the breath of the motherland is present here at every step, as they say: In visual agitation, carried out to a high ideological and artistic standard, it pervades the entire camp, in the tasteful layout of the Lenin rooms, in the songs which the soldiers sing in formation and when they have a free minute. But, of course, the main thing is that every man here knows precisely why he was sent here by the motherland. He knows, and is performing in exemplary manner the business entrusted to him, whether he is a soldier or an officer.

Antonenko himself is a graduate of the Tyumen Higher Military Engineering Command School named for Engineering Troops Marshal A.I. Proshlyakov. He comes from the village of Susat, Rostov Oblast. He graduated from the school with excellent grades. A year later he was accepted as a candidate member of the party. Antonenko's character astonished us. However much we explain to each other what the military character is, it will always be only an approximation. A military character must be seen in action. Lieutenant Antonenko spent 4 months in command of a sapper platoon and then joined the paratroopers. There he engaged in mine-laying and explosives work and taught the job to the paratroopers. He was awarded the USSR Defense Ministry badge "For Mine Clearing." He became a parachute instructor there. He has made 175 parachute jumps. He has graduated from the academy... During these years he was elected party organization secretary six times, party gorkom member once, and gorispolkom deputy once. He arrived in Afghanistan after many persistent requests.

"In general, it is as though I had two jobs," Antonenko tells me as we are returning from the training ground. "One job is here," and he pointed to the camp and the training ground. "The other is there," and he nodded somewhere into the distance, toward the mountains themselves. "In the morning I take the parade and then drive to the hamlets and to the city to see the local leaders. If you want, we can drive to the city together, I have a rendez-vous with the first secretary of the provincial party committee. Other comrades will be there too..."

After the 15-20 minutes or so the commander needed to complete some business at headquarters, we are rushing in his GAZ jeep toward the city, which was perhaps some 10 km away. On the right there extended the green orchards and rows of pyramid-shaped poplars and corn, tobacco, and wheat plantations spread like a green cover across the ground, while on the left as far as the very base of the nearby mountains only tendrils of yellowing camel's thorn lay between the rocks. Every 500-800 meters we saw young men. They squatted by the roadside and they all had submachine guns which they held between their legs barrel uppermost. Later it was explained to me in the city that these men had only recently been enemies of the republic. They had fought against it. Now they are on the side of the people's power and have concluded a contract which stipulates that they, the former enemies of the people's power, are safeguarding order and calm on the roads within a 15-kilometer radius of the city.

We were in the center of the city, surrounded on all sides by booths, mountains of watermelons and melons extending almost into the road, when Antonenko said to me:

"First let's visit Lieutenant Colonel (Gulom Mustafo Yasufzuyu); he's my friend and he'll be offended if I don't visit him. Incidentally, do you see that building?" And the lieutenant colonel pointed to the right. "That is the high school. There are three of them in the city. On the first day of the academic year the sarandoy discovered that the building of one of the high schools had been mined. If there had been an explosion, the children would have died. But the dushman also had another goal--completely disrupting the start of the academic year for all the city's children. If there had been an explosion, what parent would have sent his children to school? The sarandoy have no sappers. They turned to us. A group headed by my deputy, officer Fedorenko, cleared the mines from the high school. They cleared 21 mines in 2 hours..."

We turned from the circular plaza in the center of the city into a broad street and immediately came up against trellised gates. A sentry brought his face up to the windscreen and quickly opened the gates. We drove into the province sarandoy's headquarters. Lt Col (Gulom) greeted Lt Col Antonenko, coming out from behind his desk. They greeted each other by touching their cheeks three times. Then the conversation began. It was immediately clear they had the same business and concerns. For instance, they talked about some window frames and then about furniture, then about cement and then about a crane... The commander spoke Russian fluently. Imperceptibly, the office filled with people.

It turned out that the city's inhabitants together with Antonenko's sappers are building the first Afghan-Soviet friendship center in the province. The auditorium will have 450 seats. They have been building the center in their spare time... The walls have been put up. Finishing work has begun. Talk in the office has now turned to how to hold the center opening ceremony in the most festive way possible.

Antonenko turned to me and announced proudly, as though they were talking of his own vital interest:

"In terms of discipline, full staffing, and the number of hamlets liberated from the dushman, this province's sarandoy ranks first among the other provinces of Afghanistan."

"Our posts exist in almost all the hamlets," (Gulom) joins in the conversation. "Thanks to Lt Col Antonenko we have no problems with sappers for mine clearing. If necessary they will also give us fire support. All our hamlets know the (delgey-e estekhkom)--that is sapper subunit in Afghan. If the (delgey-e estekhkom) has appeared somewhere it means that roads free from mines will remain behind it, new bridges will appear, old ones will be repaired, and destroyed ones will be restored... Commander Antonenko has not been in our province very long but everyone knows him already..."

And I noticed that there is a deputy's badge on Lt Col Antonenko's uniform. When the time comes he will probably be reelected where he was a city Soviet deputy at his previous place of service in the motherland, but so far there have been no reelections, and he is a deputy, a chosen representative of the people. It seems to me that this is symbolic of his activity today. I saw how rapidly he became friends with people and how interested he was to talk about matters remote from military ones and about matters connected with his profession. But the main thing was that it was not just a conversation, but some question was resolved on each occasion and a way out of some circumstances was sought. It was joint business that was being decided. They had already agreed on the dump trucks and the carpenters who would work on the window frames for the friendship center and now they had agreed that the next night it might be necessary to provide fire support for a sarandoy post on the outskirts of a hamlet because according to intelligence information the dushman intended to attack it...

"Don't worry, (Gulom). We will keep a 24-hour watch," Antonenko assured him.

8.

Lt Col (Gulom) was a tall man. He had large, kindly eyes and smiled a lot. I noticed that the whole atmosphere in the office and in the corridor was energetic and exuberant and you felt that people there knew who did what. (Gulom's) fine unwrinkled uniform looked as though he had been poured into it and his whole appearance had something festive, not humdrum, about it. In this he was emulated by his subordinates. Later Lt Col (Gulom) would be revealed to me in a somewhat different image, but that was later. For now he was smiling broadly, pointing to his watch.

"We have a saying: Don't forget to eat while you are listening to a speech. Let me invite you..."

The lieutenant colonel invited us to dine in his house. Those were the kind of relations he had with Antonenko. When we entered (Gulom's) house the secretary of the provincial party committee and the provincial governor were already there. Antonenko embraced them all like bosom comrades and friends.

There was a steaming pilaff and green tea on the table...

And talk turned to business again. To the bridge across the river. Our sappers had built it of metal at one time. For several years it had served the people faithfully. But now it cannot cope with the flow of vehicles. The provincial authorities have decided to build a powerful and major bridge by their own efforts this time--the republic is confidently gaining strength. But the metal bridge must be moved to one side to erect a bridge of ferroconcrete structures in its place. And now Antonenko and the Afghan comrades were discussing how to move the metal structures to one side and what mechanisms and forces would be needed. And the governor said:

"I remember how your sappers built the bridge and people walked and drove across it and saw what the ("shuravi") were doing. It was very effective visual agitation. Then they went and spread the truth about what they had seen throughout the district. No, Comrade Antonenko, we are doing great international deeds here together..."

Antonenko started to talk about the metal bridge:

"We must work with a view to the long term. I have an idea for preserving the metal bridge. After all, it is not worn out. It could be used as a second carriageway. For that this bridge must be moved right up to the new one. The capacity will be almost doubled immediately. Look."

Nikolay Georgiyevich got out his notebook and began to draw a diagram of what he had just been talking about.

"That's interesting," the governor seized on the idea.

"In that case we'll do all the calculations and work out the blueprints," Antonenko summed up.

9.

There was a good spread. We ate pilaff from one large ornamental clay pot. We drank tea from one teapot. We broke bread from one large flat loaf. Everything on the table was shared, including concern for the bridge, the safety of the roads, and the province's economy. This was also discussed. The governor gave a figure--126--which was the percentage by which the plan for all economic indicators had been fulfilled for the first 6 months.

"Thanks for your help on the fifth," the governor said to Antonenko.

This was probably connected with the plan figure in some way and I asked the commander: What was the governor thanking him for? But it was not Antonenko but the governor who answered:

"On the fifth a gang intercepted a convoy of ours carrying freight to Salang. We immediately asked Nikolay Georgiyevich to help us. And he did."

The economy of the province and indeed probably of the entire country is so far directly dependent on tranquillity on the roads of the province and indeed probably of the entire country. And the sappers' aid on the fifth did indeed form part of the province's economic indicators...

Well, it seemed that everything had been said and everything had been agreed and we said goodbye to our hosts. We were driving through the city streets when the commander suddenly ordered the vehicle to be stopped. He opened the door. Two young men turned round. Seeing Antonenko, they approached. The lieutenant colonel greeted each of them. One of the boys said:

"Nikolay Georgiyevich, I want to talk."

The boy got into the vehicle and we drove to the subunit's billet. We were introduced--he was the first secretary of the province's Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan Committee. He thanked Antonenko for the first-aid set he had given him before some operation against the dushmans.

"(Nur Dakhmon) died there; you knew him," the secretary said. Antonenko shook his head sadly.

In the subunit billet the secretary was his own man. He spent a long time talking about something with Major B. Plonskiy, the deputy commander for political affairs, and with the Komsomol activists.

Like the commander, Plonskiy has not been in Afghanistan very long. For him too there was much which did not seem quite usual at first. For instance:

"I don't think I have encountered anywhere such a literal flood of applications to join the party as I have here. And another thing: If a young soldier arrives who was not a Komsomol member before, he asks that he should only set out on a combat mission as a Komsomol member."

But Commander Antonenko and Chief of Staff Officer A. Martynov are already working out the details of the metal bridge operation. One more joint measure, so to speak, will be accomplished. And the sappers have many such ventures with their Afghan comrades to their credit. In the language of figures, in 5 years the sappers have neutralized about 30,000 various mines and land mines and helped to restore the 110 kilometer Keshem-Feyzabad road, and the 75 kilometer Feyzabad-(Gulkhan) road while a total of over 1,000 km of roads have been repaired or newly constructed, a total of about 9,500 km of various roads have been cleared of mines, 8 bridges 100 meters long and more have been constructed... Of course, there have been losses. Petr Timofeyevich Derid--a lieutenant colonel and chief of staff--has died. Some 17 servicemen have been awarded orders of the DRA.

10.

But now some more about the province sarandoy commander. When talk turned to P. Derid during the dinner, our host became thoughtful, grief gathered in his large expressive eyes, and he began to speak softly:

"I recently visited--let's call it a European country. In a city center there is a monument to the Soviet soldier. I always saw many flowers around it. Once I noticed an old man near the monument. He was standing with a sorrowful face. His sorrow was such that I could not restrain myself from asking why he grieved. And the old man answered: 'I was once the enemy of that soldier,' and he raised his eyes to the sculpture. 'I fought against him weapon in hand. I often come here. I repent deeply because I can see what kind of life that soldier has brought to my city and my people.' That was the meeting I had. The time will come," (Gulom) continued, "and there will also be a monument to the Soviet soldier in our city. There will be flowers at its foot as there are in that European city. And he who cut off the water to the stream, he whose mines the Soviet soldier is still having to clear from our land, will come to that monument..."

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AFGHANISTAN

DRA REBEL RAID ON SOVIET TRUCK CONVOY DESCRIBED

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[From the "They Served in Afghanistan" series in the framework of the "I Serve the Soviet Union" program, presented by unidentified correspondent]

[Text] It would not be far to Kabul in a straight line, but there are no straight roads in Afghanistan. From ravine to ravine, from bridge to tunnel, from peak to peak the concrete ribbon winds. From dawn to dusk, past open road barriers and past army posts, convoys of trucks carry their load of gasoline, building materials, medicines, and foodstuffs for the Afghan people and for our troops. It is a lifeline, like the route across Lake Ladoga during the war, and just as dangerous and necessary. Because of the changes of altitude, the black ice, the precipices, and the sheer length of the journey, the road would be difficult for the young drivers even if it were not for the fact that they have to keep an eye both on the road and on the nearby summit, from where a burst of white-hot machine-gun fire could come, aimed at the cistern behind their backs. In the tank is fuel to provide light for the Afghan's hut, to give power to the tractor in the vineyard [sic] and to the taxi in the streets of Kabul. The cistern--if the burst from the dushman machine-gun hits its target--could become a ball of blinding fire.

When young soldiers arrive in Afghanistan they do not join the convoys straight away. They undergo training on the unit's territory and study the equipment, and only then do they join a convoy as probationers, accompanied by experienced drivers. Of course, it is rather tough--the mountainous terrain is very difficult and it is a hard route. At first, it is hot and dry, dust everywhere. You start climbing, and there's snow and ice, steep hairpin roads. And the young driver has to cope with all this. It is tough. But he is always helped out by his senior comrades, those who have served around 2 years in Afghanistan.

Senior Lieutenant Igor Kurbangaleyev served in the limited contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. For a long time he served side by side with the army drivers who take their trucks and gasoline tankers along the lifeline. He has traveled personally on numerous occasions in the cabin together with the driver, he has seen the difficult work of these lads who are helping to establish a peaceful life for the Afghan people. He has seen hardened drivers take the young lads under their wing, helping them with repairs during stops, with advice during marches, and with automatic fire in battle. Here is his description of one such trip.

[Kurbangaleyev] I was in a convoy under the command of Captain Kazankov. He has been awarded the Red Star order. My driver was Private Igor Kireyev. He had over 150 trips under his belt: For Afghanistan, this is regarded as a very high figure. He was driving a MAZ, a bulk tanker, that is, a vehicle for carrying fuel and lubricants. He had come under fire on numerous occasions, and, as befits Soviet soldiers, he always came out with virtue and merit, as they say. The first stage of the journey was uneventful. But on the way back, when we were loaded up with fuel, gasoline, solar and lubricating oil, we encountered dushmans at one stage. We had entered a ravine, there were mountains all around, and naturally there was only one way we could go. The army posts directly protecting this stretch of road were very far away, and so we had to repel the dushman attack on our own. During this trip, all our soldiers showed exemplary courage, bravery, and mutual support and assistance.

Private Cherniga's barge [shalanda] was put out of action when a bullet hit his engine. I should explain that a barge is a Kamaz truck with a long trailer, capable of carrying something like 14-15 tons. And this truck was put out of action. The first to rush to his aid was Warrant Officer Bondarev, commander of the technical maintenance echelon. Under fire, defying the bullets, he drove up in his own vehicle and took the other one on tow, crawling from one vehicle to the other amid flying bullets. And when he got back into his vehicle, his whole face and hands were cut by fragments of asphalt thrown up by the bullets.

Private Igor Kireyev, with whom I was driving, leapt out of his machine. Naturally, every driver tries to deliver his load intact. Igor Kireyev trained automatic fire on the dushmans. Seeing that they had bitten off more than they could chew, the dushmans reduced their fire and were then forced to withdraw from the battlefield.

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